



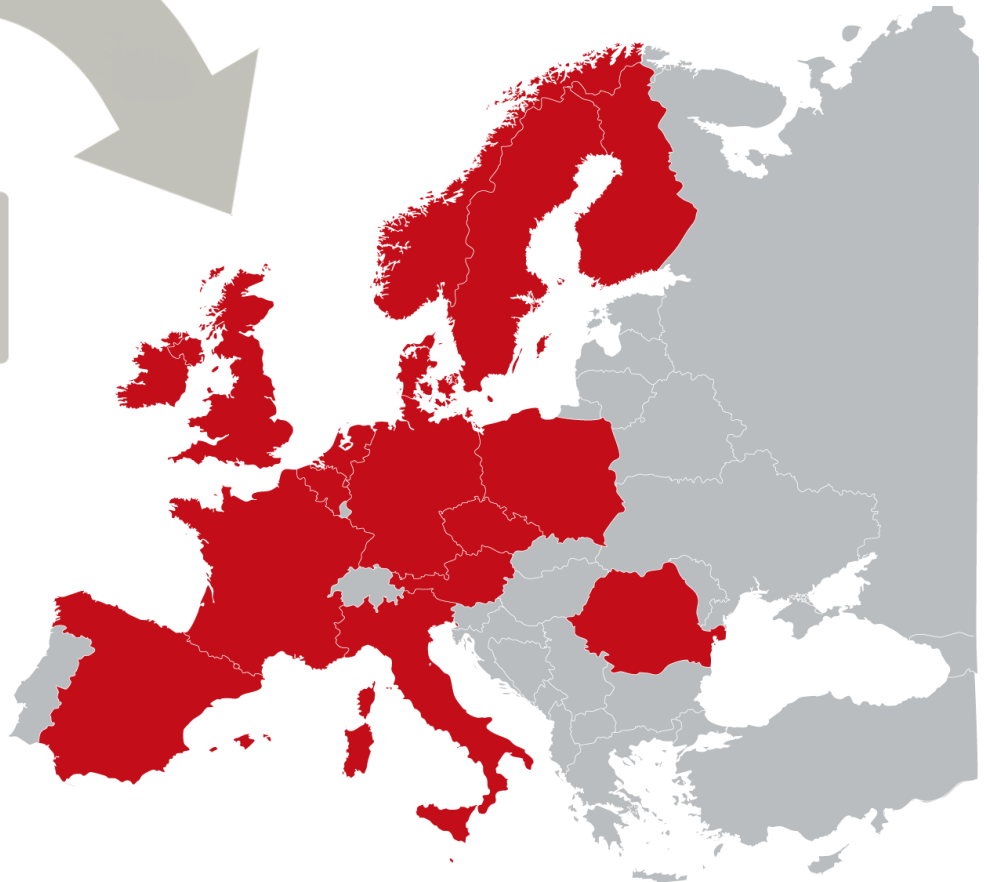
Trailer Services
TRAILERMADE SOLUTIONS

EMAIL MARKETING STRATEGY FOR TIP TRAILER SERVICES

GRADUATION ASSIGNMENT

MARIIA SVIRELINA

Svi M.



Title page

Title and subtitle:	Project Graduation Assignment – Email marketing strategy for TIP Trailer Services
Name of the author:	Mariia Svirelina
Student number:	2893452
Class code:	FIE4E
Learning Arrangement:	ALA 12 – Graduation Assignment
Supervisors' names:	Peter Biekens, Jack Keulers
Institute:	Fontys University of Applied Science
Study phase:	8th semester
Academic year,.....:	2015-2016
Date of completion:	Tuesday, 24 May, 2016
Place:	Venlo, the Netherlands
Spelling:	American English

Executive summary

TIP Trailer Services is an international logistics company, which provides a variety of transportation solutions for its clients. Over 45 years of existence, the company was able to establish itself in the European market very successfully. For the reason that the company wants to catch the latest marketing opportunities, the online marketing became an important part of their activities. The business-to-business communications are made mainly through email online marketing channel. Due to the fact that TIP Trailer Services lacks a strategy on how to attract potential customers through the email communications, this report at hand aims at designing and providing a targeted email marketing strategy for the company.

The approach, which is used to achieve the above mentioned aim is as follows. Firstly, the overview of trends within online marketing has been executed. This was followed by the analysis of legal restrictions within the European Union in terms of direct contacting of customers. Secondly, the current situation at TIP Trailer Services has been assessed, meaning the situation analysis has been done according to the first stage of SOSTAC model. For this part of the research the SWOT analysis has been executed. Thirdly, the objectives of TIP Trailer Services have been investigated according to the 5S model and the analysis of the results of internal survey have been provided. Finally, the STP model for strategy has been applied and the types of email communications at TIP Trailer Services have been outlined. Here, the SOSTAC model has been used to ensure an efficient and targeted design of the online communication strategy, the framework of actions and controlling plan.

The following conclusions have been drawn. The analysis of trends have revealed that the email communications have opportunities to be developed and it showed the different ways and tactics this can be done. In addition, the legal requirements give TIP Trailer Services the base for the ability of reactivating inactive customers. In this way the email list is able grow. The situation analysis of the current cumulative actions of responders has indicated that the TIP Trailer Services has a good base as the open rate is average, however, the changes in the email content are to be reconsidered as the other metrics do not answer to the standard within the industry. To continue, there are some opportunities for the company in terms of email marketing communications as the market is developing and the new abilities for the direct contacting and engaging of the customers are appearing. The analysis of the current objectives within TIP Trailer Services has shown that the company does not have the specificity while targeting the audience and sending the messages to them. Therefore, the objectives have been designed accordingly to the analysis of internal survey results and the outcomes of interviews. Here, the target group of TIP Trailer Services should be based on the grouping by languages and subjects of the email communication messages the customer has subscribed for. The strategy focuses on the quality positioning and the internal improvement of the executing and controlling the communications from the side of regional managers. The strategy aims to increase the lead generation and brand awareness, the level of customer satisfaction, increase the turnover as well as the relationships begin to build.

In order to reach the mentioned above objectives, the following recommendations regarding the effective email marketing strategy have been defined. TIP Trailer Services should reach its target group through interactive email marketing communications with the higher amount of links within the message. The four types of emails are defined and the structure should be followed. Moreover, the controlling actions should be executed by the regional managers through regular online reporting. The company should position itself as a provider of qualitative service and equipment with a high degree of expertise on the market.

Preface

This report has its origin in a Learning Arrangement and is a Graduation assignment for the last phase of International Business and Management studies at Fontys International Business School in Venlo, the Netherlands. The Learning Arrangement takes place in the last semester of study process. The report is also considered as a Graduation assignment for the last phase of International Business studies at HAMK University of Applied Sciences in Valkeakoski, Finland. For the reason that the author is a double degree student the Graduation assignment will be presented for both parties of the mentioned educational organizations.

The purpose of the report is to design the email marketing strategy for the international logistics company TIP Trailer Services. Within this report the strategy has been developed to support the company in the attracting potential customers through email marketing channel.

This report has been conducted as mentioned in the following. The basis of the report is an individual work of the author during the period of 20 weeks. First the information categories were selected, further the information was collected and afterwards the report was structured in order to define the best solutions for the email marketing strategy of TIP Trailer Services. Secondly, the suitable tools were chosen to gather the data. The information was used to analyze the trends, current situation and the best practices for the future email marketing strategy. As a result of this process, a comprehensive analysis of current cumulative actions of the responders, the internal survey and trends within online marketing provided the findings for creating a targeted email marketing strategy.

The report is addressed to the following parties. To start, there is TIP Trailer Services' management and employees, who are involved in the marketing activities in the company. Further, the report is addressed to the Graduation assignment supervisors - Peter Biekens and Jack Keulers. On top of that, this report is also addressed to the external readers for providing information about TIP Trailer Services, the Business-to-business email marketing communications. While reading the report, the basic knowledge of email marketing terms is favorable. This is for the reason that within the report the topic of email marketing communications is described by using the specific terms.

Lastly, the author would like to give thanks to the lecturers of HAMK University of Applied Sciences for the support during all three years of studies. The support was regarding the studying process as well as personal development. The author also thanks the lecturers of Fontys university of Applied Sciences for the professional attitude to the subjects and for the providing of base for the successful career in the future.

Date: 24th of May 2016

Place: Venlo, the Netherlands

Student: Mariia Svirelina

Signature:

Table of contents

1. Introduction	1
2. Company description.....	2
3. Project description.....	4
3.1 Problem definition	4
3.2 Project aim	5
3.3 The scope of research project	5
3.4 Research questions	6
3.5 Preliminary investigation.....	6
4. Theoretical framework	8
5. The influence of online marketing trends on the email marketing communication.....	12
5.1 Analysis of trends within online marketing.....	12
5.2 Analysis of current trends within email marketing communications	15
5.3 Analysis of legal aspects for email marketing communications	16
6. The current situation at TIP Trailer Services	19
6.1 The analysis of current cumulative actions of responders.....	19
6.2 The comparison of cumulative actions to the standard	21
6.3 SWOT analysis	22
7. The email marketing strategy for TIP Trailer Services	26
7.1 The objectives for TIP Trailer Services.....	26
7.2 Analysis of the internal survey results.....	28
7.3 Strategy (STP model)	30
7.4 Types of email communications at TIP Trailer Services.....	31
7.5 The controlling actions for the email marketing communications	32
7.6 The internal process of improvement the email marketing strategy	33
8. Conclusions	35
9. Recommendations	36
10. Critical appraisal	38
11. Reference list.....	39
12. List of figures	41
13. List of tables	42
14. List of Appendices	43

Glossary

1. **Clickthrough rate** - is the ratio of users who click on a specific link to the number of total users who view a page, email, or advertisement.
2. **Digital marketing** - is a broad term that refers to various and different promotional techniques deployed to reach customers via digital technologies. Digital marketing includes search engine optimization (SEO), search engine marketing (SEM) and link building.
3. **Cumulative actions of responders** – are the actions such as open rate, clickthrough rates, conversions during the defined period of time. They are analyzed to uncover the best, most effective responders and to uncover inactive segments for re-activation.
4. **Infographics** - are graphic visual representations of information, data or knowledge intended to present information quickly and clearly.
5. **Landing page** – is a single webpage, which appears by clicking on a search result or online advertising.
6. **Lead/lead generation** – person, who has indicated an interest in the company's product or service in some way. The generation is the initiation of consumer interest or inquiry into products or services of a business.
7. **Merge field** - is a field, which is placed in an email template, mail merge template, custom link, or formula to incorporate values from a record. For example, the merge field can be placed in an email template so that the greeting will include the name of the recipient.
8. **Open rate** - percentage of total recipients who opened the campaign. The open rate is expressed as percentage and calculated as the emails opened divided by the number of emails sent excluding bounces.
9. **Opt-in** – an express permission by a recipient to allow a marketer to send more messages.
10. **Opt-out** – an express by a recipient of an email to stop a marketer from the further sending out more messages.
11. **Pardot tool** - a business-to-business (B2B) marketing automation by Salesforce, it helps to exceed the company's revenue goals, build a marketing and sales team and expand the abilities in regards to the online marketing.
12. **Prospect** - a person regarded as likely to succeed or as a potential customer, client, etc.
13. **Salesforce tool** - customer relationship management (CRM) solution, which gives an instant connection to the sales team and visibility into leads, contacts, account, activities and the ability to drive sales revenue anywhere and anytime.
14. **Whitepapers** – information, which presents a problem and provide a solution. These are the pieces of information, which are authoritative, detailed, informative.

Abbreviations

1. **B2B** – business-to-business.
2. **HTML** - is a markup language for describing web documents or webpages.
3. **SOSTAC** – situation, objectives, strategy, tactics, actions, control.
4. **SWOT** – strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats.
5. **STP** – segmenting, targeting, positioning.
6. **The UK** – United Kingdom.

1. Introduction

In this chapter the background information about the digitalization and its impact on the businesses are presented. Moreover, the focus of the research is outlined.

***'Digital marketing is a broad term that describes a set of marketing processes that utilize all available digital channels to promote a product or service or build a digital brand.'*¹**

The world is rapidly shifting to digitalization, this trend has influenced on each sphere of our daily life and almost everyone is engaged in the process of being active online. Therefore, there is a need for companies to consider and integrate new ways of attracting customers through online marketing channels. The technologies have become much more accessible and now it is more difficult to create an awareness among potential clients by using traditional marketing tools. The trend of digitalization raised an attention of marketers in regards to the new opportunities, which have become available within the marketing field. Therefore, many companies have adjusted their marketing strategies. They try to use digital marketing tools effectively in order to create value and strengthen the powerful brand, which will ensure the loyal relationships with customers.

Generally, the digital marketing is a combination of new technologies that allows to catch an attention of audience in a fast-developing environment. The communication is timely, relevant, cost-effective and customized because of the database-driven online. The significant part of digital marketing is online marketing. The websites, email newsletters and offers, online magazines and blogs are examples of online channels, which and have been widely applied by businesses. By telling the story about the company's brand or creating a relevant content through these media channels, the brand awareness increases and attracts potential customers. This leads to a designing of usable and value-adding strategy with the best use of online marketing tools and techniques. The email marketing is a powerful channel, which is used by the businesses for the direct contacting of customers. Nowadays, it is not just a sales channel, this is a new way to educate the audience and build the loyalty. It also helps to drive the lead generations, customers' engagement and conversion rates.

This research project focuses on the online marketing communications, specifically on the email marketing at the case company - TIP Trailer Services. It provides a specific email marketing strategy for the organization in order to reach more potential customers. The content of the report is structured as follows. Chapter two is presenting the international logistics company and the logistics industry at TIP Trailer Services. In chapter three, the project description includes the problem definition, the project aim, the scope of the research, the research questions and the preliminary investigations. The fourth chapter describes the theoretical framework, which is the base for the report. Chapter five deals with the online marketing trends and its influence on the email marketing activities. Moreover, it takes a look at the legal restrictions, which are important while sending out the email communications. In the next chapter the current situation at TIP Trailer Services is described and the cumulative actions of responders are overviewed. The SOSTAC model and SWOT-analysis are applied there. The email marketing strategy of the company, new objectives and controlling actions are analyzed in chapter seven. Chapter eight contains conclusions about the conducted research. The ninth chapter presents the recommendations, followed by the critical appraisal. The final chapters contain the reference list and the list of appendices.

¹ Chris, Alex. Digital Marketing VS Internet Marketing – What is the latest trend? [Online]. June 5, 2013 [viewed 2016-12-26]

2. Company description

In this chapter the case company TIP Trailer Services is overviewed. Moreover, its operating activities within logistic industry are mentioned and the development of the company within the period of existence is shortly described.

The vision: To be the trusted advisor and provider of choice for companies active in the transport and logistics industry. To deliver integrated solutions to our customers around the management of trailer equipment throughout its life cycle. (According to the Corporate presentation 2016)

The business company, where the research is conducted is called TIP Trailer Services. TIP Trailer Services is a European company, which provides transportation and logistics services with leasing, rental, maintenance and repair and other value-added solutions. They keep the freight of customers on the move across the whole Europe. TIP Trailer Services has more than 70 branches located within 16 countries, so they offer various opportunities within the logistics industry, which can benefit the customers and establish the long-term partnership.

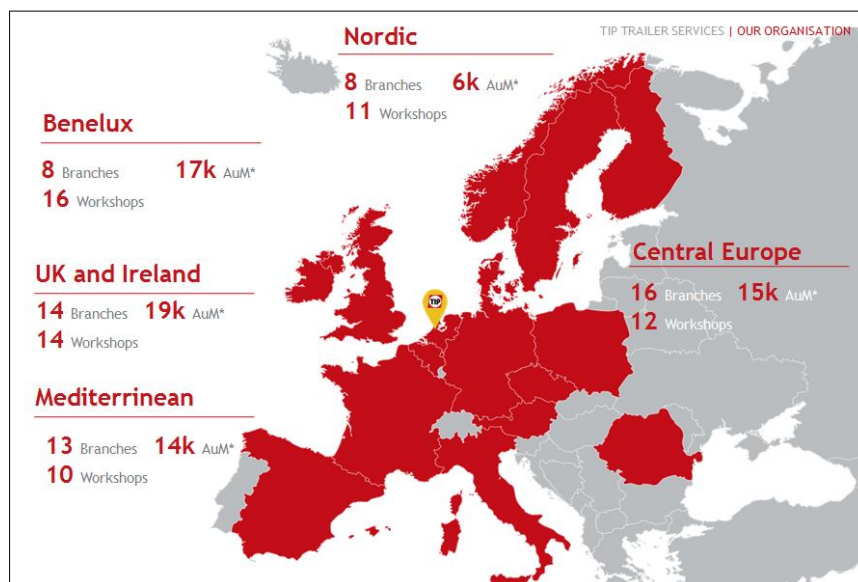


Figure 1. Organization Source: Corporate presentation 2016

Recently TIP Trailer Services became a truly innovative and integrated provider of solutions in a transportation industry. It is currently operating in Europe, dividing its area into five different regions, including the following (**Figure 1** Organization):

- Benelux consisting of the Netherlands and Belgium
- Central consisting of Germany, Austria, Poland, Romania and Czech Republic
- The UK consisting of United Kingdom and Ireland
- Mediterranean consisting of Spain, France and Italy
- Nordic consisting of Norway, Sweden, Denmark and Finland

TIP Trailer Services is a leader within the logistics industry and has one of the largest and most diverse trailer, tanker, intermodal and truck fleets in Europe. It is located in Rotterdam. A professional team in the company specifies, sources, finances, maintains, manages and remarkets the equipment for the clients. The process results into an establishment of the

loyalty with customers and bringing the best expertise for them.

TIP Trailer Services was found in 1968 as **Transport International Pool Inc.** and the first branches were opened in the Netherlands and Canada. In 2004 TIP Trailer Services has become a part of GE (General Electronics). After the significant development and opening of new workshops, in 2007 the company offered a full range of services for the transportation equipment. In 2013 it was acquired by HNA Capital. HNA Group reported assets of 73 billion EUR and generated 23 billion EUR of revenue for the financial year 2014. As a result it brought an interest of investors and potential customers. TIP Trailer Services showed the willingness to develop and expand its business.

The Headquarter of the company is situated in the Netherlands, Amsterdam. Today the company generates around 320 million EUR yearly² and it has approximately 20 million EUR of net profit, which makes TIP Trailer Services attractive for new customers and external parties. TIP Trailer Services' total managed fleet covers almost 6 million kilometers per year and the company spends around 50 million EUR for the actual maintenance of fleet.

The development of digital marketing and its increasing role for the Business-to-business environment had an impact on the TIP Trailer Services' strategy in general and on the marketing activities. In 2016 a new website was launched and aligned with the needs of customers. The work of different departments from within the organization provided a comprehensive source of its services and general company information. The basic corporate values of organization now are customer centricity, integrity and innovation.

In conclusion to the above the company has undergone many significant changes in the recent years. With the current expectations of the future it is important that the company's external and internal processes will become more efficient and effective in terms of online marketing communications as it became an important source for attracting new customers.

² In the combined statement of profit or loss for the period ended 31 December 2014, the revenue was 314.9 million euros; in 2013: 312.0 million euros; in 2012: 337.8 million euros. The average for the recent years was calculated.

3. Project description

After describing the company TIP Trailer Services in chapter 3, this chapter defines firstly the main company problem, then outlines the aim of the project and elaborates the research approach of the project. Moreover, the geographical scope of the research will be mentioned.

3.1 Problem definition

As it was previously mentioned TIP Trailer Services provides trailer leasing, rental, maintenance and repair as well as other solutions to the transportation and logistics for customers across Europe. With digital marketing becoming increasingly important nowadays for any business, the company recently started to use various online marketing tools. An important action was an implementation of the lead automation and qualification tool called “Pardot”. However, as the logistics company is not being able to reach potential customers through its email marketing channel at this point in time, it is foregoing a considerable amount of profit.

The messages sent out by means of email marketing are not targeted, they do not have consistent content and are not sent on a regular basis. The entire process from creating a new message for the potential customers until executing and following up with them lacks efficiency and effectiveness.

An example of this is the email which was sent out in January 2016. The company purchased new equipment to renew its fleet and enable itself to compete on the market as the previous range of assets was not renewed for years and became outdated. The email communication was created for mass emailing to the current list of active customers³ as opposed to targeting potential new customers. The distribution list of contacts included all the email addresses of active customers. Therefore, the majority of contacts were not interested given the fact that they were already doing business with TIP Trailer Services.

In addition to the above, the message was not personalized, meaning that there was no merge field used for the customers’ name and therefore did not attract the attention. This clearly shows the lack of effectiveness in the email marketing process. The clients were not attracted for the purchasing of new equipment. It illustrates the lack of efficiency in terms of profits. The company could have generated approximately 53,200 EUR on the yearly basis per customer⁴ through attracting them via email channel.

The cause of the problem is lack of strategy, which results from several factors: firstly it is the lack of time to design an appropriate email marketing strategy. The second factor is that the company just started to use the digital marketing tool and has lack of experience. Pardot is a sophisticated platform with a high variety of functions and it needs the time to be invested to maximize the benefits out of it. Thirdly the goal of email marketing communications is not defined precisely. As a consequence, TIP Trailer Services does not receive customer enquiries and new deals after sending out email communications. This basically leads to the missing of the ability to establish initial and further long-term contacts with approximately 5400 potential customers⁵.

³ Customers that are or have been doing business with TIP within the last 12 months.

⁴ The amount was calculated based on the average value of contract including all types of provided services for the period of one year (2015).

⁵ The number of customers was taken for four countries: the UK, the Netherlands, Germany, France from the Pardot contact database – 5471 (active and inactive customers).

Consequently, the following problem question for the research project needs to be answered:

How can TIP Trailer Services improve its email marketing strategy in order to reach potential customers?

3.2 Project aim

According to the main research question the overall aim of the research project is to create a strategy for TIP Trailer Services in regards to the use of email marketing communications efficiently and effectively. It will be followed up with the specific actions, which the company should undertake in order to reach potential customers within the target country.

The research project will focus on the several key aspects: firstly, an overview of the current trends within online marketing and email marketing; legal aspects when creating an email communication. Secondly, the current situation regarding the email marketing will be analyzed. By reconsidering the current strategy of TIP Trailer Services the thorough understanding of the future goals for the company will be provided. The third part of the research aims at creating the relevant email marketing strategy for the company.

The report aims at providing recommendations of how the email marketing strategy should be adjusted and how it should be executed. By following the steps of the provided email marketing strategy TIP Trailer Services will have clear communications with its customers by delivering the valuable and relevant content to them. The specific plan with actions will help to attract new customers and create with them long-term trustworthy relationships.

3.3 The scope of research project

It is important to define the geographical scope of the research. It aims to create the focus of the report and more specifically apply the information. As it was described above, TIP Trailer Services is currently operating in sixteen countries. The geographical scope of the research lies within four countries – the Netherlands, France, Germany and the United Kingdom. These countries generate the highest revenue in the business; have the highest number of contacts within online database and the amount of visitors at the tipeurope.com website. These three reasons are justified with calculations below.

Firstly, it was an overview of revenue by each country made from the year – 2015. For the UK and Ireland it was 27%, the Netherlands 22%, Germany 14% and France 13%. These countries have the largest amount of revenue within TIP Trailer Services. The table with all generated revenue split by country can be found in the **Appendix 1**. The revenue is illustrated on the pie-chart below:

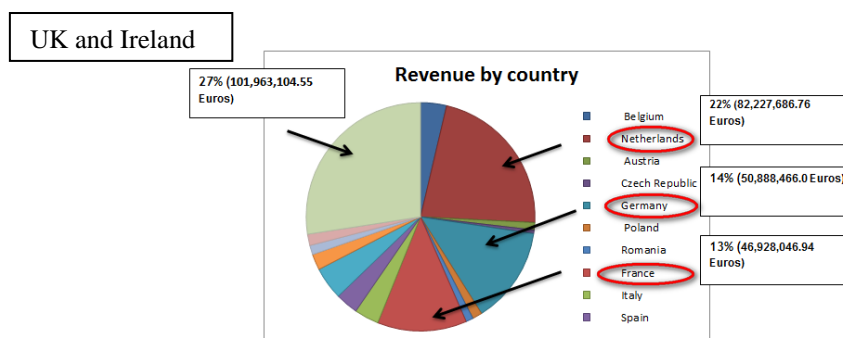


Figure 2. The revenue by country Source: own illustration

The second reason for focus on these four countries is the number of contacts available within online database. In **Appendix 2** there is a table with number of contacts and calculated percentage out of total 3525. Germany has around 60% out of total contacts; UK and Ireland 5%; France 13%, the Netherlands 2%.

The third argument is the amount of visitors on the company's website. According to the Google Analytics (precisely, the widget "Website visitors by country" for the period of March 2015 – March 2016), the following data was gathered: the UK 19%, Germany 18%, the Netherlands 10%, other 36%. The pie-chart below shows the number of visitors:

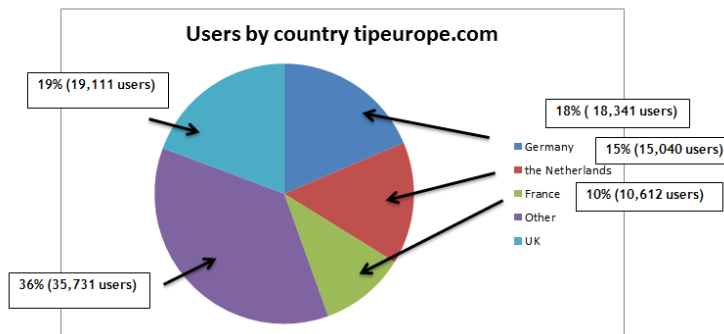


Figure 3. The number of website visitors Source: own illustration

3.4 Research questions

- 1) How the trends within online marketing have influenced on the email marketing communications?
 - What are the trends within online marketing for the period of 2012-2016?
 - What are the current trends within email marketing communications?
 - What are the legal aspects should be considered when sending an email?
- 2) What is the current situation at TIP Trailer Services regarding email marketing?
 - What are the current cumulative actions of responders?
 - How effective are these actions comparing to the email marketing standards?
- 3) How should the strategy for TIP Trailer Services look like to reach potential customers?
 - What are the objectives for the email marketing strategy at TIP Trailer Services?
 - What are the controlling actions for the email marketing communications?

3.5 Preliminary investigation

In order to gather the right data and to deliver an appropriate outcome for this project, it is crucial to conduct the research in a systematic manner. Here, the choice of research questions will be justified and the research approach will be explained.

1. How the trends within online marketing have influenced on the email marketing communications?

The first research question deals with the trends in online marketing; it shows the analysis of how they changed during the recent years. The trends will be compared within the period 2012-2016. According to the overview of trends within online marketing communications, more precise look will be taken at the trends of email marketing. The impact of online communications' development on the emails will be provided. It will aim to follow the trends while creating the strategy for email marketing communications. Moreover, the outcome will

contribute to the final recommendations. For gathering the data an external online desk research will be used. The articles from the following experts within online marketing will be used: Dave Chaffey (the CEO of Smart Insights); the blog of HubSpot and MailChamp (the world best known email marketing automation tools).

Moreover, the legal aspects will be taken into account after considering the trends. The reason for the legal analysis is that email marketing communications take a meaningful part in the organization's culture. There are certain legal issues, which protect recipients' confidentiality. Three methods of desk research will be applied in this case: external and internal online desk research; government published data. The sources of government published data will be as following: Directive on privacy and electronic communications from 2002 and European Data Protection Regulation from 2016. Additionally, an interview with legal department representative– Curt Fall will give an insight on the application of these legal requirements. The outcomes of the legal analysis will aim to provide the specific recommendations.

2. What is the current situation at TIP Trailer Services regarding the email marketing?

The second research question looks at the situation in the company. It will give more detailed outlook of what are the challenges in the company. The situation analysis will focus on the current cumulative actions of responders, its comparison to the standards will be overviewed. Therefore, the SOSTAC model will be applied and for answering the question the first stage SWOT-analysis will be designed. Here the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats will be analyzed. When the mentioned information will be clarified, it will be easier to define an effective marketing strategy for TIP Trailer Services. For gathering data about the current situation and also the current goals of email marketing activities internal and external online desk research will be used. In addition to that an interview with Senior Marketing Specialist Julia Pilkes will be conducted.

3. How should the strategy for TIP Trailer Services look like in order to reach potential customers?

In order to define and create the right email marketing strategy for TIP Trailer Services, the objectives need to be set and the controlling actions outlined. For this reason the following stages of SOSTAC model will be applied – objectives, strategy, tactics, actions and control. The objectives will be designed according to the 5S model; the strategy will be overviewed firstly following the STP model (segmenting, targeting, positioning). Each step of the model will be developed and explained by referring to the findings of internal survey and the interview with Marketing Director. The survey will be designed and sent out to the marketing managers. Additionally, the “Email excellence” by Dave Chaffey will be followed in regards to the tips for building marketing communications.

4. Theoretical framework

This chapter describes the comparison of the marketing models and analysis for the further investigation. The chosen model, which the report will be based on is explained more precisely. Moreover, the theory for the survey will be shortly discussed. It will give an insight on the general structure of the research.

Before starting the actual research, it is important to consider theoretical frameworks, which are applicable for the topic. The focus of this report is marketing strategy, specifically – email communications. Therefore, the following two most popular models have been compared: AIDAS marketing model and SOSTAC model.

AIDAS model was designed by the sales expert Elias St. Elmo Lewis, where he is outlining three main principles for selling – attracting of customers, interesting content and the phase of convincing the customer. These three qualities are the leading factors for the effective advertisement. The abbreviation of the model name states for the following: A – attention, I – interest, D – desire, A – action, S- satisfaction. The attention step involves the initial attempt, which can catch the first impression of customer. The second step of interest is about maintaining the interest of the customer by creating relevant information about the product or service. The third step is “desire”, where the marketer makes the customers want to buy by showing the features of the particular product or service. The “action” step considers how to finalize the process of lead generation. So that the prospect can become a real buyer. There are different ways of doing this. The last step is “satisfaction”, which ensures that the customers satisfied their needs and can become a “repeat customer”. The model has clear steps in defining the process of attracting customer, however it does not provide the types of analysis how the information can be gathered or related to the online marketing communications.

Therefore, the **Internet Marketing Maturity models** have been overviewed. They have been created by NVIDA Ion (the corporation for the low-cost portable computers). The focus areas of these models are the advertising, engagement, the structure of communications, the management of the results and the further optimization. It is a very detailed plan with the actions, which can be undertaken by the companies while improving their online marketing activities. However, the model does not include the analysis of current situation, which is important while creating a new strategy. As a result, the SOSTAC model, which takes a full overview from the perspective of digital marketing has been analyzed. Every stage of the model includes several forms of analysis and gives as a result a comprehensive picture of which actions should be taken further and what are the drawbacks in the current situation. Moreover, the model is suitable for email marketing activities as the analysis is applicable.

For defining a suitable solution to create an email marketing strategy at TIP Trailer Services, the SOSTAC model have been chosen as a relevant framework for the analysis. They will help to provide a base for the research as well as to execute it in a consistent way.

SOSTAC model

Professor Philip Kotler, an American marketing author and consultant: *"SOSTAC® is a system for going through the steps and building a marketing plan".*

Sam Howe, Director of CATV Marketing Southwestern Bell: *"SOSTAC is a great approach for anyone going ahead and building a marketing plan".*

The model was developed in 1990 by Paul Smith, who is the best-selling marketing author, international speaker and consultant. It is one of the leading models for the defining of direction and designing a full plan of marketing activities. The model is straightforward and systematically follows step-by-step through the process of creating an effective marketing strategy. SOSTAC model is simple and covers all the main aspects, which need to be considered within marketing planning. The model can be divided into two main parts of analysis. They are as following: **SOS**, which is mainly providing with a list for achievements and the goals, which the company sets for short-term as well as for long-term orientation. The second part – **TAC** is providing with an implementation of detailed, controllable and measurable action plan.



Figure 4. The structure of SOSTAC planning system
Source: www.PRSmith.org

Below there are six stages described with a detailed explanation of their content and types of analysis.

Stage 1 Situation analysis “Where are we now?”

The situation analysis includes the general performance, the effectiveness of current activities and segmentation. Moreover, it focuses on the usage of appropriate communication channels as well as on the impact of certain trends, which can affect the business. Regarding the *trends* within email marketing an analysis will be provided. Moreover, for looking at the current situation in the company *SWOT-analysis* will be applied. The analysis focuses on the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats.

Stage 2 Objectives “Where do we want to get to?”

The objectives part clearly defines the business mission, marketing objectives and its relation to the business development. To create the relevant objectives, “*5S goals*” model will be applied. It refers to five main “business actions” – sell, speak, serve, save and sizzle. The objectives should be created in the alignment with *SMART framework*. S – specific (numbers are included); M – measurable (ability to monitor the progress and confirm the achievement); A – actionable (the possibility to execute), R – reasonable (realistically attainable); T- timed (incorporate deadlines).

Stage 3 Strategy “How are we going to get there?”

This stage includes the analysis of *STP model*. There are three main parts for being overviewed: segmentation – how do we want to divide up the market? Targeting – which segments of the market do we wish to focus on? Positioning – how do we want to be perceived in each different target segment? While considering these three aspects, the strategy for marketing communications can be designed. The information, which was gathered from the previous stages should be considered in this step of SOSTAC model.

Stage 4 Tactics “How are we going to get there?”

As the focus of the research is email marketing communications, the variety of communication tools will not be observed. The *5P model* will be restructured and will not be fully executed. Here, in the email marketing tactics a variation of the content, which will be in the email will be defined. In this stage the messages of the company, which it is willing to communicate to the customers will be overviewed.

Stage 5 Actions “Who is going to do what and when?”

During this stage, the division of responsibilities among people in the company will be defined. The advised actions should be specific and timely-oriented. They need to be designed in accordance with the defined strategy, objectives and situation analysis. Moreover, the controlling actions and KPIs (key performance measurements) will be designed during this stage.

Stage 6 Control “How can we control, measure and develop the process?”

This stage includes several aspects, which indicate if the action performance measurements are related to the objectives, what is the goal of each KPI and how frequent the controlling actions should be reported. Moreover, it indicates the resources and review of these measurements.

By completing all stages the full and detailed overview of most important business aspects will be provided. As a result, it will lead to the creation of an effective strategy. All of the models within SOSTAC model will be analyzed from the perspective of company as well as from the perspective of customers. This model has many different parts for each stage, however, it is very clear-structured and straightforward. That is the reason why the outcome as a strategy will be realistic, tangible, measurable and ready for implementation.

Survey

In addition to the model described above, the base for the theoretical framework will be a survey. As it was stated in the preliminary investigation, the survey would be sent out internally to the regional managers. Here the process of creating and sending out the survey will be outlined.

The **survey** describes the process of selecting sample of elements of a target audience. This is a technique, which allows to contact people and find out their attitudes to the specific topic. The survey can be designed in a form of questionnaire. Firstly, the objectives of the survey are set, secondly the audience is chosen. The step after the previous ones are completed is to design the questions. The questions will be two types – open questions and multiple-choice. The open questions are providing the opportunity for the respondent to express their opinion in regards to the certain topic. The multiple-choice questions are willing to show the percentage of which alternatives of the answers have been chosen the most. Based on the findings the overview on the subject is provided. According to the results, which the respondents provide, the analysis should be executed. It can be done in a form of graphs, pie-charts and tables. When the results are analyzed the conclusions can be made. The figure below illustrates the process of designing a survey:

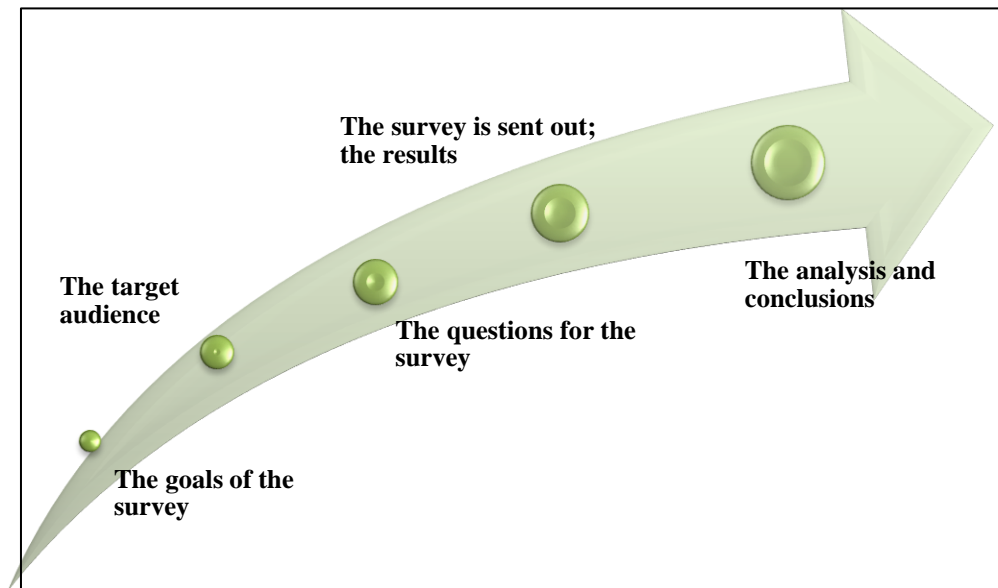


Figure 5. The process of the survey design Source: own illustration

Main research

5. The influence of online marketing trends on the email marketing communication

RQ1: How the trends within online marketing have influenced on the email marketing communications? The upcoming chapter illustrates the current trends within online marketing and its influence on the email marketing communications. The data can be seen as a starting point for TIP Trailer Services in order to review the current email marketing activities. Moreover, the chapter analyzes the legal aspects of e-communications in the European Union.

5.1 Analysis of trends within online marketing

Sub-question: What are the trends within online marketing for the period of 2012-2016?

Every year there are a lot of discussions and predictions about the most effective online marketing actions to attract customers. From the beginning of 2000s to 2010 it is the period when online marketing was growing very fast. In this part of the research the online marketing trends will be analyzed for the period of 2012-2016. This period has been chosen as it is a starting point of the development and applying online marketing activities for the majority of businesses. It includes only marketing activities, which can be accessed through the Internet. Before looking into the trends, a short explanation of each online marketing channel will be provided. It is important to outline that online marketing is a subset of digital marketing. (2015, Dave Chaffey)

One of the channels is *email marketing*. An email has a higher conversion rate comparing to other online marketing channels. The email marketing includes two main stages, where the first one is collecting and gathering the contacts for mailing list and the second is following up with those contacts, nurture them into prospects and turn into the customers. The second channel is *content marketing*. It became increasingly popular among marketers as potential customers were searching for the relevant information they would like to read on the Internet. In case if the customer liked any content, it was shared through the online communication channel. As a result, the brand of the publisher awareness increased. The third channel is *mobile marketing*. People are checking their mobile devices several times per day, so it is relevant to target smartphone users. Almost every website and email is adjusted for mobile use, it gives clients an easier navigation within the content. The fourth channel is *Social media* and *paid advertising*, which includes big amount of various platforms and ways to attract the customer. It is commonly used by marketers as the budget is comparably low and it allows to catch the customers' attention straight away. The last channel is *website*, which is often a starting point for the contact with customer and gives full information about the company. The below map illustrates the main online marketing channels for the period of 2012-2016:



Figure 6. The main online marketing channels for 2012-2016 Source: own illustration

Through years, the trends for the listed online marketing channels have been changing and some of new also appeared. According to my primary research the further analyzed trends are the most common in the period 2012-2016. They are outlined for each year and compared within this period of time.

For 2012

From the beginning of twenty first century the usage of *mobile devices* started to increase rapidly. It was a leaping point according to “Google research” in 2011 and though became a trend in 2012 (**Appendix 3**). About 75% of consumers were using the mobile phone, when the desktop were used around 40-45%. The mobile optimization trend led to the creating a mobile-friendly website, emails and other online marketing channels. The second significant trend was the *growth of Social media marketing*. The usage of Social networking was around 90% worldwide and in Europe particularly. The statistics of comScore Media can be found in **Appendix 4**. Such Social media networks as Youtube and Facebook remained the top two, however there were other social media networks emerged as well. For instance, LinkedIn focused on the Business-to-business field and became successful there quite fast. There were many new social media networks appearing, which gave to marketers new options to reach the potential customers. In 2012 for creating an actionable marketing strategy, an integration of social media tailored to the product or service offering and target audience were crucially important.

The third trend was *content marketing*. It was a new marketing communication opportunity coming to the market. According to the “MarketingProfs” research 90% of online marketing activities included content marketing by the period of 2012-2013. It was important to distinguish offerings from the competitors. The content marketing provided brand value by delivering relevant information to the customers.

The fourth trend for 2012 was a *real-time orientation*. During the process of connecting with prospects, customers and the public, marketing activities focused on the real-time tracking. This included an effective brand monitoring, related analysis of the brands, products and senior executives. The fifth trend was *email marketing* as it was considered the most effective way of communication with customers. There was a direct involvement with customers in a targeted way.

The last trend was *the data translation*, which gave information on how to act and modify marketing in future. It included an integration of existing social media, content marketing and mobile metrics. The metrics enabled to collect the appropriate data and make the improvements accordingly for the successful business operating.

For 2013

During 2013 such trends from 2012 as mobile-friendliness, Social media marketing, content marketing, real-time orientation and email marketing became more diverse. There were slight changes in regards to the trend of data translation. There was a new trend – *analytics of online marketing* became more sophisticated. It included more metrics than in the previous year. Also it had one of the most important places in the marketing plans of businesses. Moreover, the trend for *developing games* to increase brand awareness among the customers reached a high point in the online marketing in 2013.

The trend of *email marketing* continued to grow, there were various changes in regards to the email message itself (the length of subject line, amount of images, etc.). It became the leading within online communications. The *trend of visualization* was a new way of communication with customers. The videos became very popular as they could deliver the message to the customers fast and it easily could become viral.

For 2014

Regarding the trends, which were in 2013 the *content marketing* became the most-used in 2014. That year was considered the “Content marketing era”.

The content marketing enables to establish authority and gain trust with customers by creating a valuable content through a variety of channels. It includes the content marketing strategies for Social media, articles on business’s website, online Newsletters, videos and articles on other websites. The *Social media marketing* trend required more diversity in 2014. Despite of already existing Social media platforms, there were more and more appearing. For example, Printrest, Google+, Tumblr and Instagram. They provided businesses with new options for engaging the content. The new trend was image-centric content (infographics). For the reason that customers were getting a lot of advertisings on a daily basis, it became more important to make content easily and quickly digestible.

The image-based content involved customers into the reading of information further without losing an interest. The pictures emphasized certain points among the text. It could be a combination of images with minimal amount of text or statistical information from the research studies. There was no more need for deep, complicated messages. The information, which the customers desired was placed in a very clear and simple form.

For 2015

For 2015 all the trends from past transformed into more customer-centric, hard- segmented and mobile-oriented. Although from 2012 the smartphones were actively used by customers comparing to personal computers, in 2015 they became even more mass-used. In 2015 the *mobile-oriented marketing communications* were followed with *mobile optimization* and *tracking of mobile conversions*. The same online marketing trend was within Social media communications. According to the “Social web overview in 2015”, around 4 billion of population were involved into the active using of mobile devices and around one and a half billion had active mobile social accounts. (**Appendix 5**) Therefore, it had a huge influence on the development of online marketing. There was a growing opportunity to improve conversion rates and gain new customers. The trend of *content marketing* had an important role and helped to generate leads through delivering the relevant information. However, in 2015 the content became more personalized.

The *marketing analytics* became more sophisticated in 2013 and was on the first place in 2015. The reason for this was a need to see the process of interaction with customers in a very detailed way. The marketing automation technologies became 50% more important. The marketing data was a crucial point as the marketing automation enabled companies to help customers quickly get the needed information. (2014, Susanne Colwyn)

The trend for *visualization*, which has been steadily growing from 2013 was on the leading position in 2015. The visualization is a perfect marketing tool to catch an attention of big amount of audience. For instance, the video achieves more customers at one time, than the text or images. It is dynamic, colorful, usually not time-consuming and directly interacting with customers. The visualization enables to engage the customers and communicate the

brand's philosophy and aesthetics in the interactive way.

The new trend for 2015 was *hard segmentation*. It focused on hyper-segmentation and micro targeting. By recognizing the data, which can be taken from various online channels and platforms, the targeting of messages became more effective. Targeted advertisements were considered as twice more effective than non-targeted.

For 2016

The mobile-optimization is on the first position for the upcoming year. It is a significant priority for businesses. From the research of Dave Chaffey, the number of Global users is growing for mobile and decreasing for desktop. The graph can be found in the **Appendix 6**. For this reason the marketing actions will involve creating of mobile apps, mobile-optimized content and mobile social media marketing.

The *Social media marketing* includes different social media apps. The app development will be the leading for the business in 2016. Among the various social media platforms Instagram advertising is the most-used. In September 2015 this platform was opened in 30 countries and had already more than 400 million users. Moreover, the new trend for 2016 is *online blogging* and *live-stream* online marketing activities. There are more trends will be developing in the coming year, however some common ones for the period of 2012-2016 can be outlined. The conclusions were made based on the provided statistics and comparisons within the years.

- Email marketing
- Mobile optimization
- Growth of Social media marketing
- Content marketing
- Sophisticated analysis of data
- Appearing of new Social media platforms
- Visualization
- Targeting
- Personalization

All of them were changing and became more diverse during the time. They had a big influence on the development of marketing activities in general. Almost all of the mentioned online marketing trends reflected the email marketing communications. From the further analysis of email marketing trends, it can be seen how these trends reflected the changes.

5.2 Analysis of current trends within email marketing communications

Sub-question: What are the current trends within email marketing communications?

There are several email marketing trends for 2016, which are important to be considered while creating an email marketing strategy. As it was mentioned earlier, the changes in email marketing communications were influenced by online marketing trends. Some of them have transformed and became applicable for the email communications as well.

The first trend is *personalization* and *targeting*. The company should show that the approach for each customer is individual. It enables to keep the client from short-term to the long-term relationships. The segmentation can be based on the location, gender, frequency of purchases or the interest in particular information. The second trend is *mobile optimization*. According

to the general trend in online marketing the usage of mobile devices is growing yearly and by 2016 around 67% of emails are read from mobile phones (**Appendix 7**). It means that not only website and various Social media platforms should be optimized to the mobile using, but also the email communications.

The third trend is *data regulation and privacy*. For the reason that the amount of email communications sent to the customers daily is very high, there are certain legal regulations, which businesses need to follow. The permissions are getting stricter every year and the process is tightly regulated. The legal restrictions will be overviewed in the section of Chapter 5 “Legal analysis”.

The fourth trend is *interactivity* and *embedded content* in email. According to the high degree of visualization within online marketing, the content is created in the alignment with this tendency. The ways of visualization can be animated gifs and videos. It makes the email dynamic and keeps the recipients engaged. The email should be simple and various options of visualization should not distract from the key information. The fifth trend is including the *Social media links* into the email for increasing awareness of existing communication channels within the company. The trend for online marketing is focus on Social media, so when it comes to the email communications, the Social media links should be placed. Therefore, the online marketing trends influenced on the email communications. There are four main trends, which can be outlined for 2015-2016:

- Personalization and targeting
- Mobile optimization
- Data regulation and privacy
- Interactivity and embedded content

While creating the strategy for TIP Trailer Services these trends will be considered. The pure understanding of the latest email marketing techniques is essential for businesses to stay engaging and competitive on the market.

5.3 Analysis of legal aspects for email marketing communications

Sub-question: What are the legal aspects should be considered when sending an email?

The data regulation and privacy became a trend within the recent years in email marketing communications and with a fast development of technologies, the legal restrictions are important to be considered. There are two main documents, which control e-communications in the European Union - *Directive on privacy and electronic communications* from 2002 and *European Data Protection Regulation*⁶ from 2016. They regulate the process of electronic communications and control the data protection.

Additionally, the legal aspects have been discussed in the interview with Corporate Governance Lawyer at TIP Trailer Services Curt Fall. The case company is operating internationally in the European Union, therefore the restrictions should be considered for every country. However, it is time-consuming and sophisticated process. For this reason TIP Trailer Services focuses on the strictest regulations, which are applied for Germany. By following the requirements for Germany and taking them as a base is an easier and less time-

⁶ The **General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)** is a regulation by which the European Commission intends to strengthen and unify data protection for individuals within the European Union (EU). It is aimed for formal adoption in early 2016.

consuming process for TIP Trailer Services. Nevertheless, the requirements in regards to the government published documents are overviewed further as they apply for all email communications.

There are two options for TIP Trailer Services to send out email communications – by contacting active customers and inactive ones. Active customers are those, with whom the company has been doing business within last 12 months (they are in contact distribution list within Salesforce and Pardot). Inactive customers are those, whose email addresses are in the database, but they are no longer doing business with TIP Trailer Services. For inactive customers there is a period of two years, when it is recommended to send an “Opt-in” email to convince them for subscribing.

The sending out an email to customers from legal perspective will be overviewed according to the documents mentioned in the beginning. The following aspects are to be considered regarding the *Directive on privacy and electronic communications*:

Header information The sender of any commercial email should be accurately identified in the “from” form. The email should be directly linked with the company.

The main text The valid postal address of the sender should be present in order to further verify that the company, which is sending an email is legitimate.

Opt-in the direct marketing messages can be sent only to the recipients, who have given the prior consent.

There are some additions in accordance with *European Data Protection Regulation*, which was an agreement between the European Parliament, Council of Ministers and European Commission. From 2016 “Opt-in” for inactive customers or for a new subscription can be sent in a form of email with a “check-box”, where the person can tick when wants to subscribe. It is acceptable to contact by email someone, who has signed the subscription form on the website or completed the paper for opting in; also any existing customer, who has bought similar services or products from the company in the last two years. (2015,Adri Kolah)

It is important to note that in the following cases email communications cannot be sent. If the email address was copied from any source without the permission of recipient; if the email list was bought from the third party; contact anyone, who the company has not contacted in the past two years and in case if the identity of sender is not mentioned.

Opt-out The identity of the sender should be clear and provide a valid address to which opt-out request can be sent. The “Unsubscribe” link should be included in every email communication. According to *European Data Protection Regulation*, every recipient will have a right to click “do not contact”, meaning the contact details must be deleted from the company’s database.

Confidentiality Additionally, the *Directive on privacy and electronic communications* regulates the processing of personal data and the protection of privacy in the electronic communication sector. In *Article 13 “Unsolicited communications”* there are confidentiality issues outlined. They are crucial while creating an online communication.

The *Directive on privacy and electronic communications* also underlines the importance of security and confidentiality aspects. For instance, while creating an email communication, where the contact details of recipient are requested for filling in the form, TIP Trailer

Services should take appropriate technical and organizational measures to safeguard security of its services. In case of any risk, the company should inform the subscribers about the particular risk and solve the issue.

Interim conclusion Chapter 5

The rapid development of online marketing, where the email marketing communications takes a significant part includes several trends within the years, which are advisable to follow in order to reach more potential customers. For the online marketing the most common trends during the period of 2012-2016 were related to the email marketing, mobile optimization, Social media marketing, content marketing, sophisticated analysis of data, visualization, targeting and personalization. These main aspects had an impact on the development of email marketing communications. The emails for 2016 should be personalized as customers no longer wish to get untargeted email communications. They need to be mobile-friendly and have an interactive and interesting content. One of the newest and important trends for the email communications became the aspects of data regulation and privacy protection.

All the mentioned in Chapter 5 legal aspects should be considered while creating email marketing communications. As TIP Trailer Services has a policy in terms of following the regulations, it should be taken into account as well. For the reason that the company is operating within 16 countries in Europe and it is difficult to review the regulations for each of them; the rules are followed according to the requirements for Germany. The information was analyzed and gathered in accordance with articles, interviews and legal directives. The implication of the gathered information will be in the designing of final strategy, where the trends and legalization issues should be considered.

6. The current situation at TIP Trailer Services

RQ2: What is the current situation at TIP Trailer Services regarding the email marketing? In the upcoming chapter the analysis of current cumulative actions of responders and its comparison to the standards will be executed. Moreover, SWOT-analysis will be provided and the current email marketing goals of the company will be shortly described.

6.1 The analysis of current cumulative actions of responders

Sub-question: What are the current cumulative actions of responders?

After looking into the trends of email marketing communications, it is important to have in-depth look into the current situation. The situation analysis at TIP Trailer Services will be executed by looking at the several email marketing campaigns, which were sent out in the period starting with an implementation of Pardot tool. For the reason that the company was using “iContact” previously for sending out emails, there is no available data about the past data. The email campaigns will be analyzed only for the period starting in 2016 January to May 2016.

The comparison includes several aspects: HTML open rate, number of unique opens, total clickthrough rate and opt-out rate (unsubscribe rate). Also the overview for the content of email and the group of contacts is provided. According to the indicators for these cumulative actions, the average rates are calculated and presented in the **Table 1**. The detailed information about the email campaigns, which have been analyzed can be found in **Appendix 8**.

The name of email campaign	Numbers of contacts an email was delivered	HTML open rate, %	Total clickthrough rate, %	Opt-out rate, %	Time period	Contact list
“News TIP France”	440	32.1	0	0.23	February 2016	France
“Semitrailer for sale in March 2016”	4454	35.6	5.75	0.45	March 2016	France and others
“Sales day”	120	20	0	1.5	February 2016	Benelux
“New trailers available”	373	15.6	1.7	0.55	March 2016	Benelux
“Rent and buy trailers”	1103	21.8	0	1.09	April 2016	Benelux
“Rent a trailer”	1067	27.6	1.88	0.72	April 2016	Austria and Germany
“An invitation to the CV show”	802	15.03	0.62	1.12	February 2016	UK and Ireland
Average rate		23.9	1.4	0.81		

Table 1. The cumulative actions of responders in Pardot

From the Table 1, it can be seen that the email communications are not sent out on a regular basis, the time period and target region or country are not specified. Regarding this fact the total clickthrough and opt-out rates are not stable. They tend to differ a lot from the previously sent communications. The average total **clickthrough rate is 1.4 %**. The link, which is usually pasted in the email is link to the website for sales. There are no other additional sources, which the email communication has a reference to.

The HTML open rate is **on average 23.9 %** and the fluctuations are not that significant among the emails sent. An **opt-out average rate is 0.81%**.

According to the above data the several tendencies can be outlined within email communications at TIP Trailer Services. Firstly, *the tendency of changes in the HTML open rate depending on the total number of contacts*. The more recipients, the higher is the HTML open rate. From the graph below, the **maximum HTML open rate is 35.6 %**, where the number of recipients is the highest – 4454. The email was sent to the several locations where the company has branches, moreover the external emails addresses were added. This correlation is showed in the graph below:

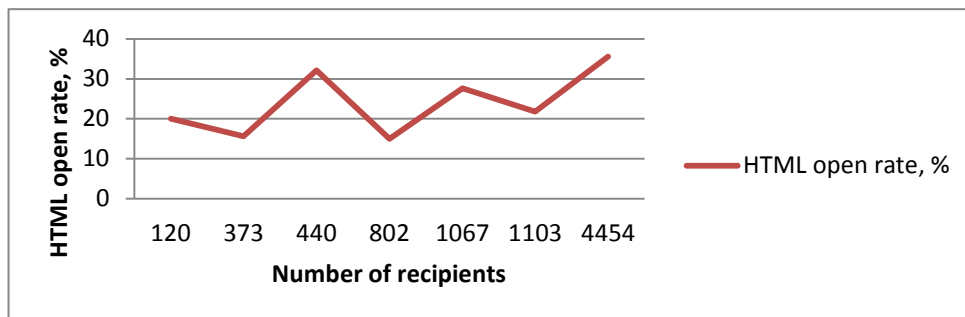


Figure 7. The correlation between number of recipients and HTML open rate at TIP

Secondly, *the tendency of changes in HTML open rate in relation to “Subject line”* is overviewed. The subject lines of emails have been analyzed and its correlation with open rate was drawn. The results can be viewed on the graph below:

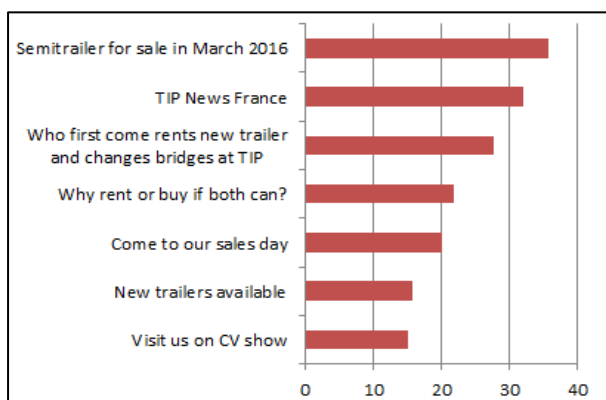


Figure 8. The correlation between subject line and HTML open rate at TIP Trailer Services

The lowest HTML open rates were when the subject lines were as following: “Visit us on CV show”, “New trailers available”, “Come to our sales day”. The recipients were less willing to open the emails with the mentioned subject lines. The more engagement from customers can be seen when there is a direct question in the subject line. For instance: “Why rent or buy if both can”, “Who first come rents new trailer and changes bridges at TIP?”. The highest HTML open rates are in the case when the subject line announces the trailers for sale or other promotional offers. Moreover, the high HTML open rate is seen for an email with the subject line: “TIP News France”. It was a first test email, which included the information about business of TIP and some news regarding France. There are no specific emails at the moment, which are sent out on a regular basis with a purpose to inform the customers about the news from other regions, where TIP Trailer Services is operating.

The third tendency within email communications sent out by TIP Trailer Services is the *changes of Total clickthrough rate depending on the content of emails.*

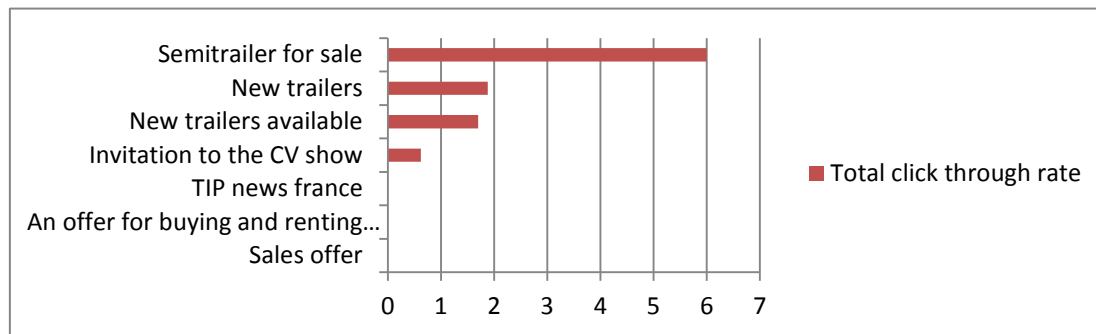


Figure 9. The total clickthrough rate, % in relation to the content of email

The email communications with the highest clickthrough rate include the links to the sales website of TIP Trailer Services, where the range of equipment is presented. **The highest rate is 6%.** The recipients when opening an email can follow to the website for a more detailed look of either new trailers available or just check out the currently available equipment. However, when the email has only the links without visualization as images, the clickthrough rate is either 0% or less about 2%.

To conclude, the cumulative actions of responders at TIP Trailer Services show that the rates depend on several factors. There are correlations between the cumulative actions of responders. They can vary depending on the subject line, the content of the email, the type of links and their amount. The cumulative actions will be compared further with the standards and the interim conclusion based on the findings will be provided.

6.2 The comparison of cumulative actions to the standard

Sub-question: How effective are these actions comparing to the email marketing standards?

The current cumulative actions of responders within TIP Trailer Services were analyzed previously. Following the findings, they will be further compared with the standard actions. According to the “Email marketing statistics 2016” by Dave Chaffey and the research of “MailChimp” here are the average rates for the following cumulative actions– *open rate, clickthrough rate and unsubscribe rate.*

These rates have an important role and tend to be crucial while evaluating the effectiveness of email marketing communications. As a base for comparison the rates were taken as for “Business and Finance industry” and depending on the company size (in case of TIP Trailer Services the category “more than 50 employees” was selected). Their standard cumulative actions are as the following:

Open rate – 21.3 % - 23 %

Clickthrough rate – 2.8 %

Opt-out (unsubscribe) rate – 0.2 %

According to the **Table 1** “The cumulative actions of responders” the rates at TIP Trailer Services are as following:

Open rate – 23.9 %

Clickthrough rate – 1.4 %

Opt-out (unsubscribe) rate – 0.81 %

The HTML open rate is average comparing to the standard within the industry. The open rate is usually measured by an image load or link click. The HTML open rate at TIP Trailer Services is slightly above the standard – 23.9%. However, when looking at the clickthrough rate (the number of clicks on the links which are placed into the email), it is 50% less than the standard rate. Here is the gap for improvement as clickthrough rate is important, because the potential customer needs to follow the link for checking out the offers and become a potential lead. It also shows an interest in becoming a client of the company and establishing long-term relationships. The opt-out rate indicates number of recipients, who unsubscribed from the email communications after the email was sent out. The rate for unsubscribing at TIP Trailer Services is 25% higher, than the average rate. This shows that it needs to be improved in a way of the content of email and its relevancy to the customers. Therefore, the **Figure 7** shows the comparison of the cumulative actions of the company to the standards:

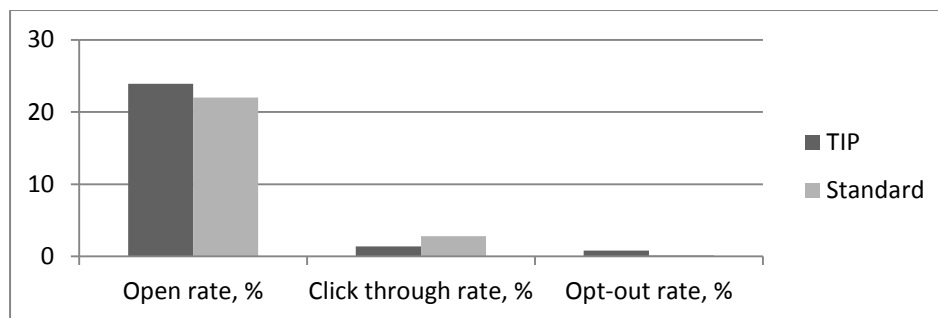


Figure 10. The rates at TIP Trailer Services in comparison to the standards

The first part of Chapter 6 overviews the data related to the current cumulative actions of responders at TIP Trailer Services and includes the comparison of them to the standards. The overall results in the company are not sufficient as they are lower than the standard ones. Although the open rate is average for the industry, it does not necessarily mean that customers follow the link or even read the information placed into the email communication. The clickthrough rate is considered to be more relevant while evaluating the effectiveness of email communications. Based on the findings these aspects will be considered and the suggestions for improvement made while designing the email marketing strategy.

6.3 SWOT analysis

Sub-question: What are the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats for TIP Trailer Services?

After the analysis of cumulative actions of responders at TIP Trailer Services, the situation analysis will be provided. By analyzing the results from the interview with Julia Pilkes SWOT-analysis is presented in the **Table 2**. The questions of the interview and answers can be found in **Appendix 9**. According to Jain, Trehan (2010) SWOT analysis is a model, which is broadly used in marketing in order to collect the internal information from inside of the organization and the external information from the market. Therefore, it is crucial for the evaluation of current situation for the business. Moreover, for the defining of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats for TIP Trailer Services the findings from the internal

survey, which was sent to the marketing managers have been considered. The results and statistics from the survey can be found in **Appendix 12**.

Strengths	Weaknesses
Implementation of the new tool	Lack of knowledge and practice with new tool
Flexibility of budget for online marketing activities	Limited control over the way an email communication is planned
The professional design of email communications is in accordance with TIP Trailer Services' corporate culture	Email communications are sent out without regular basis
Involvement of regional managers in the process of creating an email communication	The objectives when the emails are sent out are not defined
	The content of email communications is not defined
	No mobile optimization for the emails
Opportunities	Threats
The technological innovations within online marketing industry	Legal aspects regarding email communications
TIP has around 5000 customers, but only 3525 email addresses of active customers	The growth of Social media communications, which can overlap the email marketing
New website, which aims the list with contacts to grow	Clickthrough rates are low and opt-out rates are high
Creating a regular email communications with a clear purpose and relevant information for the customers	The competition on the market

Table 2. SWOT analysis TIP Trailer Services in regards to the email marketing communications

Firstly, the strengths will be discussed. TIP Trailer Services recently became more flexible in terms of implementation new platforms for an effective online communications. This shows the readiness of the company for the digital marketing world and catching the opportunities. Therefore, the budget for online marketing communications is flexible. The implementation of Pardot tool cost 6000 EUR and TIP Trailer Services pays on a yearly basis 24000 EUR. The additional costs around 5000EUR are spent for the additional online marketing activities and the same amount for the offline campaigns. It shows that the company is also ready to develop and catch the recent trends and follow the developing online marketing possibilities.

According to the interview with Julia Pilkes (Senior Marketing Specialist), TIP Trailer Services uses an email marketing communications since 2011 and every email is designed in regards to the company's corporate culture and branding. As a result, the strength of the email marketing at TIP Trailer Services is that it is professionally designed. Lastly, the strong point of the email communications in the company is the involvement of regional managers in the process of creating emails. This gave an ability to adjust the marketing messages in a more targeted way.

Secondly, the weaknesses are presented. To begin with, at the moment the personnel within TIP Trailer Services has lack of experience in using the Pardot tool. It affects the process of planning an email communication internally. As a result, the communications are not sent on a regular basis. Moreover, according to the findings of internal survey, there is limited control over the email communications. For instance, when the email is ready to send out, some small changes may lead to the delay of sending it. It affects the whole process of executing marketing activities effectively and timely. The lack of control affects the overall process. There are no controlling actions and systematic reporting of the results in regards to the

executed email campaigns. Furthermore, for the reason that people are working in the company for many years, they are not used to the online communications. Even when the objectives are defined, they tend to be short-term, but it needs to have a long-term perspective. It is not only important to catch an attention of customer, but also more crucial to establish long-term relationships with the prospects. There is also no mobile optimization when the emails are sent out. It leads to the lower open rate as a lot of recipients open their email from smartphones.

Thirdly, the opportunities are outlined. The current trends in online marketing offer new ways of communication with customers. For instance, emails can include various animations, visualizations and external links to Social media. All of these aim to expand the area of marketing activities for TIP Trailer Services. Regarding the growth of contact list, the company has 1555 customers of inactive customers and there is an ability to reactivate them. The process of opting them in should be executed in accordance with the legal requirements. Furthermore, the company launched a new website in the end of April. The new website ⁷ has three options to aim the list of customers growing. The forms are created for leasing, rental, maintenance and repair and general form "Contact us". While the visitors of the website fill in the particular form, the email addresses are automatically saved in the Salesforce database and the prospects are available for the further contacting. Therefore, there is an opportunity to gather new contacts. For example, for the period 1 January 2016 – 15 April, there were 13 leads from the past website, after launching the new one, for the period 15 April 2016 – 3 May 2016 there were 49 leads. Therefore, by creating a clear and regular email marketing communications and using the mentioned opportunities, TIP Trailer Services will enable to improve the business performance and increase lead generation.

Lastly, the threats are illustrated. There are legal aspects, which should be taken into consideration, which have been mentioned in Chapter 5. They were previously analyzed. The results of the analysis will enable to deal with this threat successfully. The growth of Social media marketing channels and its diversity is one of threats for email marketing. It can become challenging as the customers will not use emails for finding out the information about the particular service or company, they will use the Social media channels. For this reason, the email communications need to have direct links with Social media platforms and vice-versa. Moreover, TIP Trailer Services has low clickthrough rates and high opt-out rates, which is a challenge for the company. The rates should be analyzed constantly and the statistics will help to avoid the related challenges. Furthermore, the market is competitive as the company is operating within 16 European countries. Most of them keep being updated to the latest technologies and trends. TIP Trailer Services needs to follow the latest technological and online innovations.

The current goals at TIP Trailer Services

Additionally, the situation analysis, the current objectives in TIP Trailer Services in regards to the email marketing communications have been discussed. According to the interviews with Senior Marketing Specialist and Executive Director Marketing Europe, the following goals have been outlined. During the interview it was mentioned that the goals for email communications have never been determined precisely and that the current objectives are quite general. Here are the findings from the interviews. The current activities of email marketing communications are used for two main objectives: to generate leads and to create

⁷ www.tipeurope.com

brand awareness. The lead generation is a main purpose of any marketing activities and emails are not an exception. However, the lead generation at TIP Trailer Services is not executed effectively as there is a lack of communication with the Sales team. The second objective – to create brand awareness is important for any business. Despite that, there need to be more specific and measurable objectives, the execution of which can be under the constant control.

Interim conclusion Chapter 6

In this chapter the current cumulative actions of responders at TIP Trailer Services have been analyzed and compared to the standards. The correlations between various indications were described. The outcome will be applied for the improvement of email marketing strategy. Depending on which subject lines resulted to the higher open rate, which links led to the higher clickthrough rates the recommendations will be provided. The highest rates were when the subject lines were in the form of question and the emails were announcing the promotional offer. The highest clickthrough rates were when the email was visualized and the link to the sales website was provided. Although the open rate is the average comparing to the standard of the industry, the company still is not contacted via email channel. It will be relevant to include the contact form, where the customer can fill in the details and afterwards directly contacted by the representative of Sales team. The various ways of the visualization need to be used such as videos and presentations. Also the external articles and links can lead to the higher clickthrough rates.

By continuing the analysis of the current situation at TIP Trailer Services SWOT model has been conducted and the strong and weak aspects in the company's email marketing have been presented. The willingness of TIP Trailer Services for the development in online marketing and its experience within the industry are the crucial strengths. The weaknesses such as lack of expertise within automation tool and unclear objectives will be discussed for the improvement in the final email strategy. Moreover, the opportunities can be great alternatives for the development of online marketing activities at TIP Trailer Services. They need to be considered while giving the recommendations.

While conducting the internal interviews and the results of the survey, the objectives have been described. It has been pointed out that there were no specific goals and there was a lack of long-term orientation. Following the current results from the research, firstly new objectives will be outlined. Further the strategy itself will be designed.

7. The email marketing strategy for TIP Trailer Services

RQ: How should the strategy for TIP Trailer Services look like to reach potential customers? In this chapter SOSTAC model is followed. Firstly, the new objectives are discussed. Also the analysis of internal survey results is overviewed. According to the findings, the tactics, actions and control are described.

7.1 The objectives for TIP Trailer Services

Sub-question: What are the objectives for the email marketing strategy at TIP Trailer Services?

According to the findings from the second part of the research, it was outlined that there are no certain objectives for email marketing activities. SOSTAC model was overviewed in Chapter 6 in the section “SWOT-analysis”. Here the objectives will be examined. They will be designed following 5S model. It was developed by Dave Chaffey. It offers a basis that should be considered while coming up with a strategy for online marketing activities. There are five main guidelines, which need to be followed: sell, speak, serve, save and sizzle.

1. Lead generation – sell

The main conversion goal

The first objective for TIP Trailer Services is the lead generation. It can be reached by the capturing names and identify people who are qualified candidates for sales efforts. Within email marketing communication channel, it can be done through gathering additional information by requesting it in the contact form. This includes the constant analyzing of statistics about prospects – their geographic and demographic characteristics. When people fill in the contact form (while the link is placed in the email) the full name, name of the company, enquiry type (leasing, rental, services, other) will be gathered. Furthermore, the contact details such as phone number and email address are part of the contact form. As a result of tight cooperation with the Sales team the prospects will be directly sent to them and the marketing efforts will be executed.

2. Increase brand awareness – speak

The strong engagement with the users

In order to succeed in the European market, it is essential for TIP Trailer Services to create brand awareness and constantly increase it. By doing so, the company will become more competitive on the market. TIP Trailer Services will be able to offer its equipment and services to a growing number of customers. This objective can be reached by establishing email marketing communications, which will offer an interesting and relevant content for the customers. This includes adaptations to the culture of every country where TIP Trailer Services is currently operating. According to the geographical scope of the research – the Netherlands, Germany, France and the UK; the specific cultural aspects of these countries should be considered, especially the translations to the particular language.

As it was discussed in Chapter 6, the HTML open rate of email communications for TIP Trailer Services is average – 23.9%. This is a good basis, but the clickthrough rate is very low – 1.4%. As the links placed into email are important, the overall content needs an improvement. These links in email except of TIP’s website can be the links to the Social

media – Facebook, LinkedIn, Youtube, Vimeo and Twitter. The most relevant channel for the company at the moment is LinkedIn, where there are 2251 followers. Therefore, the brand awareness can be increased through this channel. For instance, this can be done by creating competitions for customers and requesting to fill the contact form, where they will leave the contact information including email address. Afterwards, the email communication as opt-in can be sent to the emails. The growth of contact distribution list through Social media channels does not require high costs, so it can be done easily. The active engagement will allow a proactive and reactive behavior already within a few weeks.

3. Customer satisfaction – serve

Adding value to the customer online journey

As TIP Trailer Services offers services with a long-term perspective, the customer satisfaction is essential. To add value to the business, there should be a quick response to the customer provided. When the potential customer contacted the company by email or filled in the form for requesting a quote, responding to the customer within one week decreases customers' dissatisfaction and ensures a clear communication. Throughout active and frequent contact with a customer, the loyalty will be established. Moreover, new customers can be won regularly. Such Customer Relationship management does not only benefit TIP Trailer Services as a company and aims to expand the business. Also it allows customers to specify their needs. Hence, the completion actions within Pardot tool can be a source of reliable data through which TIP Trailer Services can identify more possibilities to keep in touch with the prospects. The completion actions in Pardot can be set up in the tool. The completion actions are described below.

The first option is “a prospect opens this email”. The following completion actions are applied for these three options - adding to list, adding to salesforce.com, adjusting score, notify an assigned user, remover from list, send auto-responder email, set prospect's source campaign. The second option is “a prospect clicks this email”, the third one is “a prospect unsubscribes via email”. By using them, the actions of responders can be tracked and the customer satisfaction can be reached. For instance, when the customer filled the form in the website and requests a quote for leasing, the completion action “added to the list” can be used. It means that the prospect will automatically get the quote. Furthermore, the potential customer will be placed into a list as a new prospect. Following this, further the email communications can be sent through opting-in. TIP Trailer Services can identify more completion actions as well as planned actions of Sales team to grow and perfect its business communications. Aiming at least 95% of customer satisfaction yearly is a guideline to the success.

4. Increase turnover and growing the list of contacts – save

The ability to reduce organizational costs

The fourth objective is increasing of turnover and the growth of contact list. Regarding the implementation of new marketing automation tool – Pardot at TIP Trailer Services, the costs are as following: for an implementation in January 2016 it cost 6000€, on a year basis the costs will be 24000€, meaning 2000€ per month. Additional costs for using Social media channels, offline marketing activities vary 5000 - 15000€, including exhibitions, printing of marketing materials, corporate booklets, etc. To use the Pardot tool in the most effective way

in terms of email marketing communications will provide at least 3 assumed leads generated through email marketing channel.

The average contract value (converted) for one client is 53203,7 € per year. The amount was calculated in excel according to the data gathered from Salesforce platform. The table can be found in the **Appendix 10**. Considering that one customer helps to generate revenue per month – 4433.64 €, there will be revenue $4433.64\text{€} \times 3 = 13299\text{€}$ monthly. It will lead to being successful in email marketing activities and consequently to 25% higher revenue after implementation of the email marketing strategy.

5. Relationship building - sizzle

Building brand with using various platforms

The report focuses on the email marketing communications, nevertheless without integrating the other online marketing channels, the previously mentioned objectives will not be achieved. TIP Trailer Services recently started to use Social media communications channels. These channels might be placed in the email communications in a form of links or videos. The integration with other platforms will aim to the further successful email marketing actions. The relationships with customers will be based in a long-term perspective.

7.2 Analysis of the internal survey results

For more in-depth look at the situation at TIP Trailer Services in terms of email marketing communications, a survey has been created for sending out internally. It was sent out to the marketing managers and to four employees within Salesforce team. The members of the team are also responsible for the online marketing activities in the company. The questions of the survey can be found in **Appendix 11**. The managers of the following regions were asked:

Mediterranean region – Veronique Goncalves (Regional Marketing Manager, TIP Solution Development Mediterranean); Jonathan Fath (Lead Solution Developer Region, TIP General Management Mediterranean)

Central region – Anna-Sophie Hoppner (Marketing Manager Central Region, TIP General Management Central & Eastern Europe)

Benelux region – Marc Quist (Marketing & Commercial Excellence Manager, TIP Commercial Benelux)

Nordics region – Julie Odderschede (Regional Marketing Manager, TIP Commercial Marketing Nordics)

The main goals of the survey were to gather information for the further providing of recommendations regarding: the frequency of email communications, the content of these communications and an extent of personalization of the emails. The participants of the survey are experienced managers within marketing field, who are working in the industry during a long period of time. According to the results of the survey, around 11% of responders work in the company less than 5 years, 33% more than 5 years, 22% more than 10 years and 33% around 10 years. The results of the survey can be found in **Appendix 12**. This shows that the managers are experienced within marketing field and they provide valuable answers.

The first question focuses on the targeting of countries, where the company is operating. The results will aim to define the target for the implementation of email marketing strategy. For the reason that Germany, France, the Netherlands and the UK have the most impact on

revenue and have the largest data of clients firstly the implementation of email marketing strategy should be done for these countries. The results are shown in **Appendix 12 Question 1**. These countries were selected by each of the responders. Also Austria, Belgium, Sweden had around 35-60% rate.

The second question takes a look at the personalization aspect of emails. Depending on the region, where the emails are sent out, the introductory words are different. 77% of responders use "Dear customer" (more general introduction), the same response rate is for the introductory words "Dear 'first name' and 'last name'"; 33% for "Dear 'first name'", 11% - no introductory words at all. The managers from the Central region give the preference for the introductory words, which include full name of the recipients. The reason is that in the Central region the communications are more formal. For Benelux the introductory words can be in a form of all the mentioned alternatives. The same is applied for the UK and Ireland.

The third question refers to the content of email communications. The list of suggested answers were as following: text, videos, images, presentations, animations, amusement material (some interesting facts and external topics), all of the above, other. Most of the answers were "text", "images" (55.6%). The rate for "videos" was 22.2%, for the presentations 33.3% and for "all of the above" - 44.4%. The most focus is on the implementation of text and images, however for attracting more customers – the videos and presentations on the relevant topics can be used as according to the respondents' answers they are also important to consider.

The fourth question focuses on the frequency of email communications. The question is asked in order to define how often the emails are to be sent out. There were several alternatives for answer: on the daily, weekly, biweekly, monthly, quarterly basis and other. The majority of answers were as following: on a biweekly basis - around 66%, other - 55.6%. For the 'other' the suggestions there were the following suggestions written - "up to the specific events, offers", "during the high sales season of trailers, semitrailers", "during special events, new acquisitions", "exhibition of the trailers". Therefore, the focus of the sending out the email communications will be on a biweekly basis and in case of special events, sales seasons.

The fifth question was asked in order to define the topics, which will be covered within email marketing communications and will increase the engagement with customers. There were several alternatives offered as answers: logistics industry news, the ways to make industry environmentally friendly, technological innovations, special offers and discounts, advice regarding the logistics industry, amusement material, company's news updates. All the responders pointed out that special offers should be the content of email; 88.9% of responders selected "the logistics industry news"; 77.8% - the technological news; 66.7% - company's news updates; 44.4% - advice regarding the logistics industry. So the focus topic areas can be the information related to the TIP Trailer Services itself and the additional information in relation to the logistics industry.

The sixth question refers to the challenges, which TIP Trailer Services has within email marketing communications. The most common answers were as following. Firstly, there is lack of communication internally while creating an email marketing communication. Secondly, the challenge is the creation of the relevant information for customers. Thirdly, it is the legal restrictions and the reactivation of inactive customers.

7.3 Strategy (STP model)

Firstly, the strategy will be overviewed by using STP model, which includes segmenting, targeting and positioning. This model is a part of the Stage 3 in SOSTAC model. It helps to define the customers, target them and outline the ways of positioning for the company on the market.

Segmenting - how do we want to divide up the market?

The relevant market for email targeting can be divided into five different segments. Here the geographic segmentation will be applied. The first segment is Central Europe region and it consists of the following countries – Germany, Poland, Romania, Czech Republic and Austria. This segment has in total 2306 number of active contacts at the moment within Pardot tool. The second segment is Mediterranean region, which consists of France, Italy and Spain. There are 712 of active contacts for this segment. The third segment can be defined is UK region, which also includes Ireland. This segment has in total of 190 active contacts. The fourth segment is Benelux, which consists of Netherlands and Belgium. There are total of 80 active customers. The fifth segment is Nordics region, which includes Sweden, Finland, Norway and Denmark. The number of active customers is 237.

The segmenting of contacts for email marketing communications also can be done as a division for “active” and “inactive” customers. There are in total around 4000 active customers and approximately 1500 inactive ones (for the year of 2014-2015).

Targeting - which segments of the market do we wish to focus on?

The following countries were chosen as a target for email marketing strategy – Germany and Austria; the Netherlands and Belgium; the UK and Ireland; France. As the operating market of TIP Trailer Services is within 16 countries, the target has been done for those, which are with the highest number of contacts in Pardot and have the same language. As in Germany and Austria there is German language, the same applies for the UK and Ireland; the Netherlands and Belgium. The actions can be more specific and the whole process of email communications will be less time-consuming. The email marketing strategy and action plan can be implemented further for other countries, however in the beginning it is important to focus on these. The second argument that supports the choice of this target group is the results of internal survey, which has been sent out to the regional managers. More information about the answers can be found in **Appendix 12 Question 1**. Regarding the active and inactive customers, the targeting will not be made as the strategy will be applicable for both types of contacts.

Positioning – how we do we want to be perceived in each different target segment?

The quality positioning is chosen for TIP Trailer Services. For the logistics industry it is highly important to deliver qualitative services as the contracts with clients are made for the long period and with future perspective. So that email communications need to be professionally designed, being precise and concise. Moreover, for the successful quality positioning, besides the email communications, it is important to provide the information about the company through other online marketing channels on Facebook, Youtube, Twitter, LinkedIn and Vimeo.

7.4 Types of email communications at TIP Trailer Services

Stage 4 Tactics – SOSTAC model “How are we going to get there?”

In this part of Chapter 7 the tactics, which can be applied will be overviewed. The first aspect will be the types of communications at TIP Trailer Services. The second aspect is maximizing the content for the other online marketing communications.

According to the findings from internal survey and trends within online marketing, the following types of email communications have been pointed out for TIP Trailer Services. They were designed in accordance with the previously mentioned objectives.

- e-Newsletter
- offers emails and event invites
- automatic emails
- company's news updates

The first email type is *e-Newsletter*. It is a great way to build loyalty with customers. The distribution of Newsletter will give an opportunity to establish TIP Trailer Services as a thought leader in the industry by publishing and sending the regular articles on the topics and trends in the logistics area. By sending out the e-Newsletter there will be an ability to educate the audience and create brand awareness. The news about the changes within logistics industry is to be divided by the region, where the communication is sent out. As people are no longer willing to get the advertisings, it is more relevant to deliver useful content. This type of emails can include the technological innovations, how to make industry environmental friendly, news and updates within logistics industry.

The second type of emails is a *combination of offer emails and event invites*. Although these email communications are used purely for the sales purpose, they need still to be valuable for the recipients. There can be a link to the website pasted with images of available equipment or the link to this specific event with more detailed information. This type of emails can be sent out on the certain date of the event or depending on the sales season. It is important to keep the Sales team updated about the decisions made.

The third type of emails is *automatic email communications*. As it was mentioned previously and discussed in the interview with Senior Marketing Specialist, the new website has several forms, which are in the process of launching into the marketing automation tools (into Pardot and Salesforce). When the customer fills in the form for requesting a quote, the prospect is automatically placed into the list of “Interested in...”. (depending on the name of form, the list is defined). Such email communications should be sent regularly to the customers, who filled the contact details and used for the further distributing of other email communications of the company.

The last type of email communications is *company's news updates*. They can be sent out when TIP Trailer Services has new acquisitions, the changes in the addresses of workshops and the information related to the changes with equipment which is rent out. These communications enable to keep already existing clients updated. By sending out the emails the customers will be informed about the new processes within TIP Trailer Services.

The maximizing content for all the other online marketing channels

By looking into the possible division for email marketing communications at TIP Trailer Services, the short analysis of other online channels have been made. The company just

recently started the online marketing activities. The following number of followers and subscribers are at the moment for the below mentioned communication channels: LinkedIn – 3133; Facebook likes: 255; Youtube: 14; the average amount of views – 250 to 500.

For the reason that email communications include the links to the online marketing platforms, the consistent content needs to be provided on those platforms as well. Currently the LinkedIn profile of the company is not updated regularly. In the **Appendix 13** there is a screenshot of TIP Trailer Services LinkedIn profile. When the email communications are to be sent out, the content of e-Newsletter can be posted on this channel as well. For Youtube channel the video can be posted about the company and furthermore, some news about the ongoing events and competitions.

7.5 The controlling actions for the email marketing communications

Sub-question: What are the controlling actions for the email marketing communications?

Stage 5 Actions – SOSTAC model “Who is going to do what and when?” and **Stage 6 Control (KPIs)** “How can we control, measure and develop the process?”

The two key aspects of email marketing strategy are actions and control. For avoiding the challenges that TIP Trailer Services is experiencing the following controlling activities and actions have been designed. In the below table the actions and frequency of control are determined:

Metrics for email marketing activities			
KPIs	Unit	Frequency of control	Success indicators
Clickthrough rate	%	monthly	increase
Conversion rate	%	monthly	increase
Bounce rate	%	monthly	decrease
Unsubscribe rate	%	monthly	decrease
Number of customers filled the form on the website	people	weekly	increase

Table 3. Metrics for email marketing communications for TIP Trailer Services

The controlling activities are defined with the KPIs in the **Table 3**. These quantifiable measures the company needs to use to compare the performance in terms of meeting strategic and operational goals.

Clickthrough rate (CTR). This metrics gives a direct insight into how many people from the list are engaging with the content and interested in learning more about the brand or an offer. Depending on the rate, the adjustments can be made, the different links and content can be inserted in order to see what are the correlations.

Conversion rate. It is a percentage of email recipients, who clicked on the link in email and completed the desired action. The conversion is directly tied to the call-to-action in the email. Behind the landing page, can be a link to the form from the website, slideshare presentation, videos, whitepapers, interview with experts.

Bounce rate. This shows the percentage of the total emails that could not be successfully delivered. There are two types of bounce rates and both are important to analyze while carrying the statistics. The soft bounces are the result of a temporary or technical problem. The hard bounces are when the email addresses are invalid or closed. When looking at this metrics, the technical issues can be maintained and the improvements made.

Unsubscribe rate. It will help to track how many recipients are opting-out after the campaign is sent out. Based on the results, the conclusions are made and the adjustments can be provided.

Number of customers filled the form on the website. By tracking the number of customers, who filled the form, the new contacts can be controlled and followed to the Sales team. The link for the form also will be pasted into the email, so that through this channel, lead generation will increase.

All of the mentioned metrics can be tracked within Pardot tool and the benefit is that the results are available for the personnel internally. Moreover, the table for analytics and certain metrics can be adjusted by the user. TIP Trailer Services needs to make sure that the analytics of Pardot is used fully. In that way the marketing managers will be able to get a clear overview on the developments and how effective the email marketing strategy reaches the target group.

7.6 The internal process of improvement the email marketing strategy

According to the discussed during the interview the process of email marketing communications, the challenge of internal process lacks efficiency as well. Therefore, the training for the personnel for Pardot automation tool needs to be provided. The process map can be found in the **Appendix 14**. The period is one month. During every week the information about specific topics will be provided. During the first week the general introduction to the online marketing activities at TIP Trailer Services and the background information about Pardot. During the second week the overview of Pardot analytics and email marketing metrics. Moreover, the legal restrictions will be outlined. For the third week, the introduction to the new email marketing strategy with objectives will be made and an explanation of four new types of emails provided. For the last week the summary and the practice time will be organized. The training will be provided by WebEx (internally within the company).

After the training the process map for the actions within TIP Trailer Services before sending out the emails are drawn below:

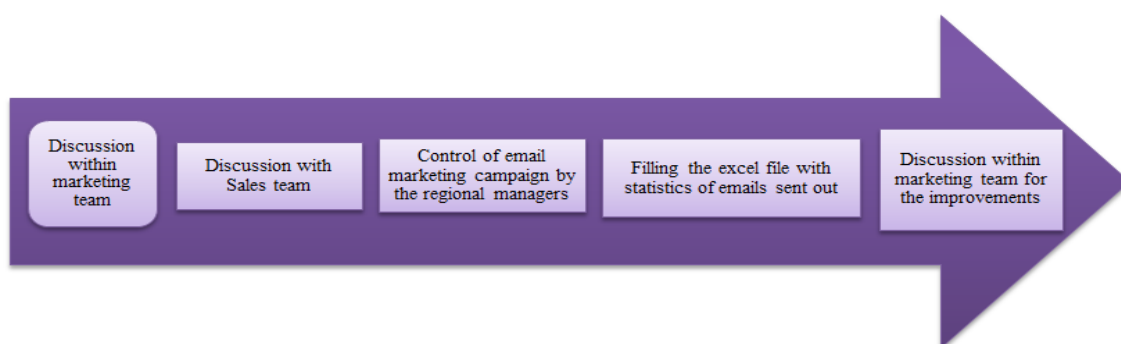


Figure 11. The internal process of the email communications planning Source: own illustration

Firstly, there is a discussion with marketing team and planning an email communication. By considering the objectives, the structure and the main messages, which needs to be delivered are clarified. (2013, Dave Chaffey) Secondly, the discussion with Sales team is important. The sales team is mainly responsible for the prospects, which are coming from different sources. The process of control and executing an email marketing campaign will be done within each region specifically by the regional managers. Therefore, the excel document

will be created in order to keep statistics and see the general overview of performance. After analyzing the results from the sent email marketing communications there will be hold a discussion with marketing managers for the further improvements. The actions are to be taken on a weekly basis. The meetings will be short and concise (around 20 minutes). The statistics should be overviewed on a daily basis and concluded every week.

Interim conclusion Chapter 7

According to the designed objectives for TIP Trailer Services for email marketing communications and the findings from the internal survey, an interim conclusion can be made. There were five main goals set for the company – lead generation, increasing brand awareness, customer satisfaction, increasing turnover and growing the list of contacts, relationship building. These objectives will lead company to the structured actions while sending out emails. By considering every objective before the actual creation of the email, there will be a clear structure of email communications and control actions.

The STP model (segmenting, targeting and positioning) was outlined. The focus groups of the email marketing strategy will be combined in accordance with the language specificity. The contacts for Germany and Austria; France; the Netherlands and Belgium; the UK and Ireland are the targeting ones. Therefore, the following types of email communications have been drawn: e-Newsletter, offers and event invites, automatic emails and company's news updates. Moreover, the maximizing of the email marketing communications at TIP Trailer Services can be reached through the use of other online marketing channels – Youtube, LinkedIn, Vimeo, Facebook. When the email marketing campaign is executed, the following KPIs are applied – clickthrough rate, conversion rate, bounce rate, unsubscribe rate and the number of customers, who filled the form on the website. For the improvement of email marketing activities in the case company the internal training needs to be provided. It will include the general introduction to the Pardot too, the overview of Pardot analytics, the information about the excel reporting of results from the email marketing campaign, an introduction to the new strategy and the practice part.

8. Conclusions

In the following chapter conclusions on the previous research findings will be drawn in order to take a bigger picture of the situation at TIP Trailer Services.

The main objective of the report is to set up the right email communication strategy for TIP Trailer Services in order to reach more potential customers. In order to do so, the evaluation of trends within online marketing has been done. Its affect on the businesses and email marketing communications was drawn. The legal requirements for the emails were analyzed for the providing of the right steps while creating every single email communication. After that the current strategy at TIP Trailer Services was overviewed. The current cumulative actions of responders were evaluated and the tendencies were outlined. By reviewing the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats, the look at the situation in TIP Trailer Services in terms of email marketing was taken more precisely.

In the last part of the research the new objectives for the company were described in accordance with the findings from the interviews and internal survey. The objectives are specific and measurable enough to be successful at the implementation of the strategy. The clear targeting was made and the additional ways of maximizing the use of online marketing channels were described. Moreover, the controlling actions were outlined and the KPIs were defined. The four types of email marketing communications for the company were distinguished and shortly described. In addition, for the improvement of the internal communications training for personnel was designed. By using the defined email marketing strategy, TIP Trailer Services will be able to reach the potential customers successfully. The strategy will help to gain the trust and loyalty of the targeted audience. This will lead to convert the customers into leads and develop the business.

The following interim conclusions have been drawn. According to the development of online marketing trends, the following changes affected the email communications: personalization, mobile optimization, interactivity and embedded content and the data regulation and privacy. Based on the findings, TIP Trailer Services has a promising legal base for the successful implementation of email marketing strategy. Therefore there is a big perspective for growing the email list. Regarding the current situation at TIP Trailer Services, the following findings are drawn. For the improvement of the metrics the company needs to follow the designed strategy and four types of the email communications were drawn. They were designed in the alignment with five objectives. The objectives are as following: lead generation, increasing brand awareness, customer satisfaction, increasing turnover and growing the list of contacts, relationship building. According to the findings from interviews and the internal survey, the following four types of emails were outlined – e-Newsletter, offers emails and event invites, automatic emails and company's news updates. For the company it is important to maximize the use of other online marketing channels as they increase the overall engagement with customers. While considering the above mentioned conclusions, the email communications will be more targeted, sent out on the regular basis and will be under the constant control of the marketing team Lastly, the suggestions on the ways of improvement of internal control in regards to the email marketing activities were given. This can be executed with an aim of controlling metrics.

As the email marketing activities have transformed for the recent years, it is important to follow the trends and satisfy the needs of customers. The business-to-business environment has always been challenging in terms of direct marketing, however the designed strategy helps to create the concise messages, the systematic internal process of controlling and executing them. Following the strategy brand awareness and lead generation will be achieved.

9. Recommendations

In the following chapter the recommendations for the email marketing strategy of TIP Trailer Services will be provided. The recommendations are based on the results of the research, which has been conducted and according to the information gathered from primary and secondary sources.

Here are the recommendations regarding the improvement of email marketing strategy at TIP Trailer Services. The following objectives should be achieved: increasing brand awareness by 50%, increasing the lead generation by 30%, increasing customer satisfaction by 95%, increasing turnover by 25%, increasing the list of contacts by 60%. In addition, TIP Trailer Services should target the current countries by the language differences (therefore, the communications on the following languages): Dutch language – the Netherlands and Belgium, English language – the UK and Ireland, French language – France, German language – Germany and Austria. TIP Trailer Services should follow the quality positioning and be an experienced provider of transportation solutions for the customers. To start the improvement the initial stage should be executed. The internal training for the regional managers should be provided during a one-month period, where the main aspects for the use of the Pardot tool and the introduction to the new marketing strategy will be outlined.

Furthermore, the company has 1555 inactive customers within its database for the period of 2014-2015 years. They need to be opted-in by sending out an email communication. Each email should be in the correct language, depending on the region of sending. According to the legal restrictions, which have been analyzed during the research project, the email with opt-in with an offer to subscribe is recommended to send only once not to be in the “junk email. This email should have an already ticked check-box for the subscription, the video for engagement with customers, links to the Social media platforms as well as to the website. Also the “contact form” should be inserted in the email so that the recipient will be able to directly contact the company in the case of being interested.

The subject line should be in a form of question, short and concise. The recommendation is given according to the analysis of cumulative actions of respondents, where the highest open rate of 35.6% was reached when the subject line was in a form of question. This will be the first step for the growing list of contacts. The second recommendation is to grow the list of contacts. The several ways are suggested: firstly, through the new website and regular checking if the contacts filled the form. The distribution according to their interest should be done (leasing, rental, maintenance and repair) for the future targeted emails. The second new way for growing the contacts list is by providing interesting content about the logistics industry through Social media channels and requesting for an email address where the full article or research can be sent. The same can be implemented on the website, besides the general contact forms.

The email communications should be divided into the four types: e-Newsletter, offers emails and event invites, automatic emails and company’s news updates. The emails should be sent out by the regional marketing managers. The following frequency planning should be followed: E-Newsletters - a biweekly basis, the offers and invites emails – up to the specific date, automatic emails – not later than within one week when the customer has filled the form on the website, company’s news updates – a monthly basis. The process of measurement and control should be executed by the regional managers. The clickthrough, conversion, bounce, unsubscribe rates should be analyzed on a monthly basis and the reporting in the digital form

presented to the Sales and Marketing teams. The excel document needs to be created for the tracking the email marketing metrics. The strong communication should be established between the Marketing and Sales departments. So that the process from the contacting the customer to the lead generation will be executed successfully.

Regarding the content of email communications, the following recommendations are to be applied. To increase the clickthrough rate up to 3.5%, the external links to the all Social media platforms, website, video should be included. Depending on the purpose of email the links for the external articles can be added with a strong use of visualization techniques. Following the main trend of mobile optimization, the emails should be able to read from the smartphone devices. For maximizing the engagement of the recipients with the online marketing content also provided by TIP Trailer Services on the Social media marketing platforms, the articles should be posted there with links in emails. The competitions for customers and special offers can be published on LinkedIn. For taking part in the competition, the email address should be provided by visitors, so in this case also the email list will continue to grow.

All the explained recommendations should be applied in the period of three months where the first month is the internal training for the regional marketing managers. The second is the design of the new content for four types of email communications. Last phase is the test emails. The further research is to be conducted in regards to the external customer survey. This is to be designed and executed by the author in July 2016. By following the mentioned recommendations, TIP Trailer Services will increase its turnover, lead generation, contacts list and the relationship building with clients. The most important is being customer centric. It is essential to create real value-added customer experiences that nurture the customers' satisfaction. It will lead to the ultimately lead to a profitable business.

10. Critical appraisal

In this chapter the report is critically appraised. Firstly, the limitations of the report will be outlined. Secondly, the value of the report and further research opportunities will be explained.

The limitations of the report are as follows. To start, the external survey was not sent out to the customers. Instead of this the internal questionnaire was designed. The policy of the company did not allow sending out such communications. It was told that the marketing department planned to design such survey and it would take much more time than the author had for the survey. Furthermore, the data about the email communications, which were sent before an implementation of Pardot tool, was not available. For instance, the statistics regarding the cumulative actions of recipients was taken only for the recent period of half a year. The reason for this was that the previous marketing automation tool for creating emails was “iContact”. When the contract was finished and Pardot was implemented, the information about the sent email campaigns was not available anymore.

While following SOSTAC digital marketing model not all the types of suggested analysis have been executed. During the stage 5 “Tactics”, 4Ps model was not overviewed. It includes product, price, place and promotion. This model applies for the whole digital marketing strategy and is not able to be considered while designing specifically the strategy for email marketing communications. Moreover, it is a lack of literature specifically about email marketing. The information was mostly used according to the online articles and benchmarks within online communications. The literature used focused mostly on the digital marketing in general and some tips for the overall marketing purposes. Finally, the time for the in-depth research of the topic was limited. The significant part of the internship was used for implementing of the ongoing projects and the detailed learning of the working process in the company. Consequently, the time for the writing of thesis was not enough. The outcomes of the research may lack the detailed overview.

Here, the value of the report and further research opportunities are discussed. On the one hand, it provides highly valuable information about many aspects regarding the email communications and the design of them as well as the suggestions for the internal improvement of the process. TIP Trailer Services by considering the delivered outcomes will have a full overview of how the email marketing activities can be executed to attract more customers. This is because the analysis includes evaluation of facts and important trends in the area of online communications, which might affect the implementation of email marketing strategy. However, on the other hand, as the marketing team have limited knowledge and experience with Pardot tool, the defined email marketing strategy can be used as guidelines, but it should be assessed critically before the implementation.

In addition, the report leaves a room for the further research, such as information about the effectiveness of cumulative actions of responders and its geographical influence within TIP Trailer Services. It should be investigated in more detailed way. Moreover, the combination of email marketing activities with other online marketing channels also needs in-depth look as in the report it was mentioned shortly and without critical execution and competitor analysis.

11. Reference list

Literature:

Fill, C. 2006. Simply Marketing Communications. Pearson Education (Chapter 6 – “Online direct marketing”, Chapter 9 “Regulating of marketing communications”)

Cheng, Z. & Nault, B., 2007. Internet Channel Entry: Retail Coverage and Entry Cost Advantage, *Information Technology and Management*, p.111- 132

Ghauri, P. & Gronhaug, K. 2010. *Research Methods in Business Studies*. 4th Edition. England: Pearson Education Limited

Kotler, P. & Armstrong, G. 2014. *Company and Marketing Strategy: Partnering to Build Customer Relationships*. In *Principles of Marketing* (15th Edition). N.J: Pearson. 50-55

Emarketing Excellence: Planning and Optimizing your Digital Marketing By Dave Chaffey, PR Smith 4th edition 2013

Citation in text: (2013, Dave Chaffey)

Government documents:

Directive 2002/58/EC (Directive on Privacy and Electronic Communications)

Online sources:

2012, *Digital evolution in B2B marketing* by Marketing Research Leadership Council in partnership with Google [Online]

Available at:

http://www.thebluecollarmarketer.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/the-digital-evolution-in-b2b-marketing_research-studies.pdf

2014, *Global email marketing regulations* Lionbridge Marketing

Available at: <http://content.lionbridge.com/know-global-email-regulations/>

2014, *10 Email Marketing Trends for 2015* by Susanne Colwyn

Available at:

<http://www.smartinsights.com/email-marketing/email-communications-strategy/email-marketing-trends-for-2015/>

Citation in text: (2014, Susanne Colwyn)

2015, *B2B email marketing European legislation* by Celsius International [Online]

Available at:

<file:///C:/Users/600000860/Downloads/Celsius%20b2b%20email%20marketing%20european%20legislation.pdf>

2015, *The difference between e-marketing/ digital marketing/internet marketing* by Dave Chaffey [Online]

Available at:

<http://www.smartinsights.com/digital-marketing-strategy/online-marketing-mix/definitions-of-e-marketing-vs-internet-vs-digital-marketing/>

Citation in text: (2015, Dave Chaffey)

2015, *Marketing implications of the new EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)* by Adri Kolah [Online]

Available at:

<http://www.smartinsights.com/marketplace-analysis/digital-marketing-laws/marketing-implications-of-the-new-eu-general-data-protection-regulation-gdpr-part-2/>

Citation in text: (2015, Adri Kolah)

2015, *Marketing trends for 2016* by Dave Chaffey [Online]

Available at:

<http://www.smartinsights.com/managing-digital-marketing/marketing-innovation/marketing-trends-2016/>

2016, *Email marketing statistics 2016* by Dave Chaffey [Online]

Available at:

<http://www.smartinsights.com/email-marketing/email-communications-strategy/statistics-sources-for-email-marketing/>

Developing a marketing communications plan using the SOSTAC model planning guide Business Services Agency Ltd - Registered in England: 3169628 [Online]

Available at:

http://hospitalitybusinesscoach.weebly.com/uploads/1/2/0/7/120786/12.13.38_sostac.pdf

SOSTAC® *Planning System* [Online]

Available at: [PR Smith's SOSTAC® webpage](#)

12. List of figures

Figure 1. Organization – p.1

Source: Corporate presentation 2016

Figure 2. The revenue by country – p. 5

Source: own illustration

Figure 3. The number of website visitors – p.6

Source: own illustration

Figure 4. The structure of SOSTAC planning system – p.9

Source: www.PRSmith.org

Figure 5. The process of the survey design – p.11

Source: own illustration

Figure 6. The main online marketing channels for 2012-2016 – p.12

Source: own illustration

Figure 7. The correlation between number of recipients and HTML open rate at TIP – p.20

Source: own illustration

Figure 8. The correlation between subject line and HTML open rate at TIP Trailer Services – p.20

Source: own illustration

Figure 9. The total clickthrough rate in relation to the content of email – p.21

Source: own illustration

Figure 10. The rates at TIP Trailer Services in comparison to the standards – p.22

Source: own illustration

Figure 11. The internal process of the email communications planning – p.33

Source: own illustration

13. List of tables

Table 1. The cumulative actions of responders in Pardot – p.19

Table 2. SWOT analysis TIP Trailer Services in regards to the email marketing communications – p.23

Table 3. Metrics for email marketing communications for TIP Trailer Services – p.32

14. List of Appendices

Appendix 1 The revenue split by country at TIP Trailer Services 2015	44
Appendix 2 The number of active contacts at TIP Trailer Services	45
Appendix 3 The consumer usage of devices 2011	46
Appendix 4 The usage of Social media channels worldwide October 2011	47
Appendix 5 Mobile users and active mobile social accounts for 2015	48
Appendix 6 The number of Global users from 2007-2015 by Dave Chaffey	49
Appendix 7 The devices for checking emails 2015	50
Appendix 8 Cumulative actions of responders	51
Appendix 9 The answers for an interview with Julia Pilkes	54
Appendix 10 An average contract value in 2015 within Sales form platform	56
Appendix 11 The internal survey regarding the email marketing communications	57
Appendix 12 The results from the internal survey	59
Appendix 13 The screenshot of Linkedin profile of TIP Trailer Services	62
Appendix 14 The process map of internal training for TIP Trailer Services	63
Appendix 15 Company supervisor feedback	64
Appendix 16 Competence report	68
Appendix 17 Statement of authenticity	70

Appendix 1 The revenue split by country at TIP Trailer Services 2015

Branch	GL Account
	- Revenue
- Total TIP	371,643,444.99
- Benelux	95,860,631.27
+ Belgium	13,632,944.51
+ Netherlands	82,227,686.76
- Central	65,689,755.35
+ Austria	3,894,841.20
+ Czech Republic	1,894,088.74
+ Germany	50,888,466.07
+ Poland	5,128,700.28
+ Romania	3,883,659.06
- Med	71,748,757.33
+ France	46,928,046.94
+ Italy	12,926,751.92
+ Spain	11,893,958.47
- Nordic	36,381,196.49
+ Denmark	17,178,583.85
+ Finland	8,369,596.13
+ Norway	4,881,153.04
+ Sweden	5,951,863.47
- UK Tankers	25,048,966.67
+ SPV UK Tankers	922,695.46
+ TIP UK Tankers	24,126,271.21
- UK Trailers & Ireland	76,914,137.88
+ Ireland	6,368,371.59
+ UK Trailer	70,545,766.29

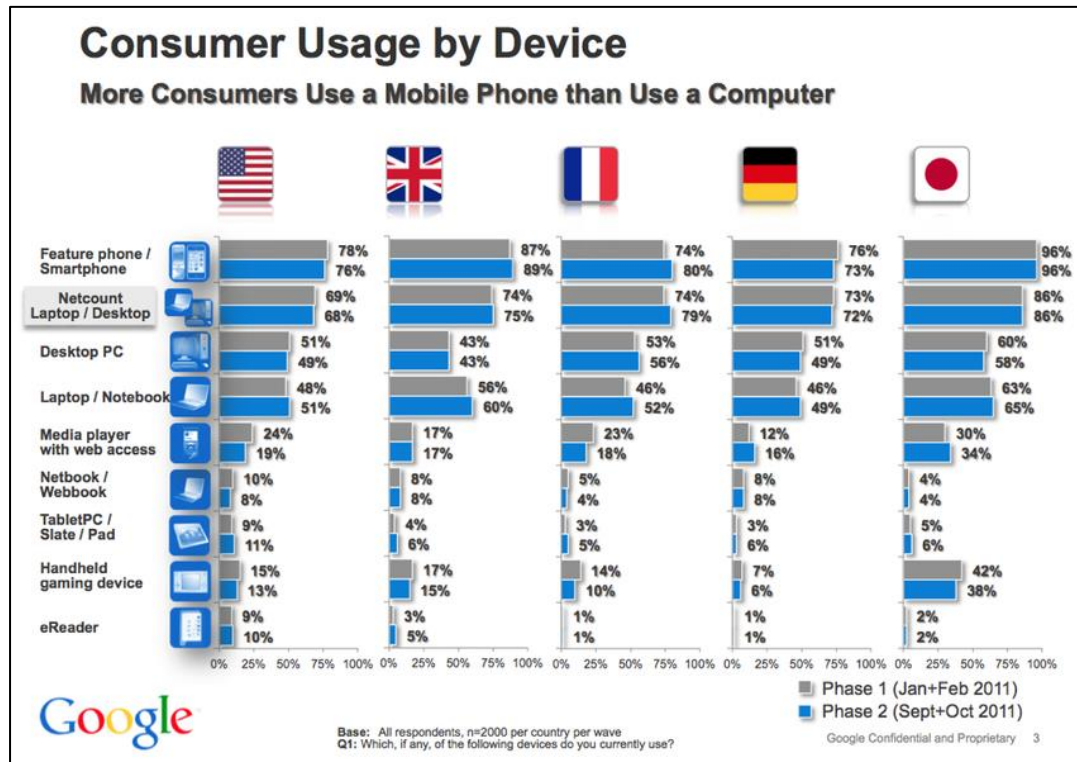
Source: made by author

Appendix 2 The number of active contacts at TIP Trailer Services

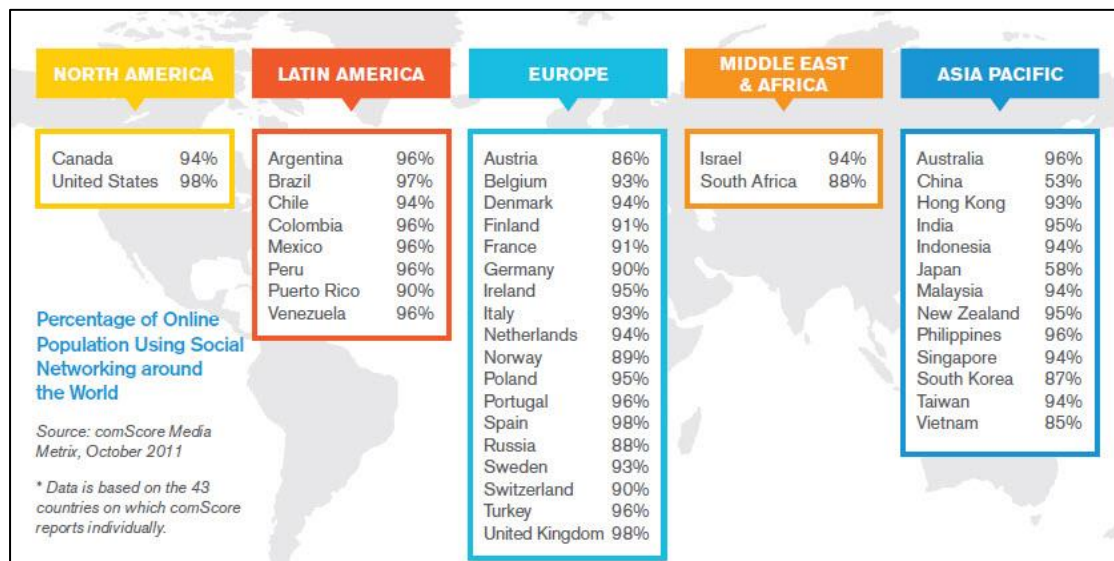
The number of contacts is according to the Pardot tool.

Country	N of contacts	Percentage, %
Sweden	50	1.418439716
Finland	75	2.127659574
Norway	24	0.680851064
UK & Ireland	190	5.390070922
Spain	177	5.021276596
Italy	71	2.014184397
Romania	31	0.879432624
Poland	96	2.723404255
Czech Republic	43	1.219858156
Austria	35	0.992907801
Denmark	88	2.496453901
France	464	13.16312057
Germany	2101	59.60283688
Netherlands	80	2.269503546
Total	3525	100

Source: made by author

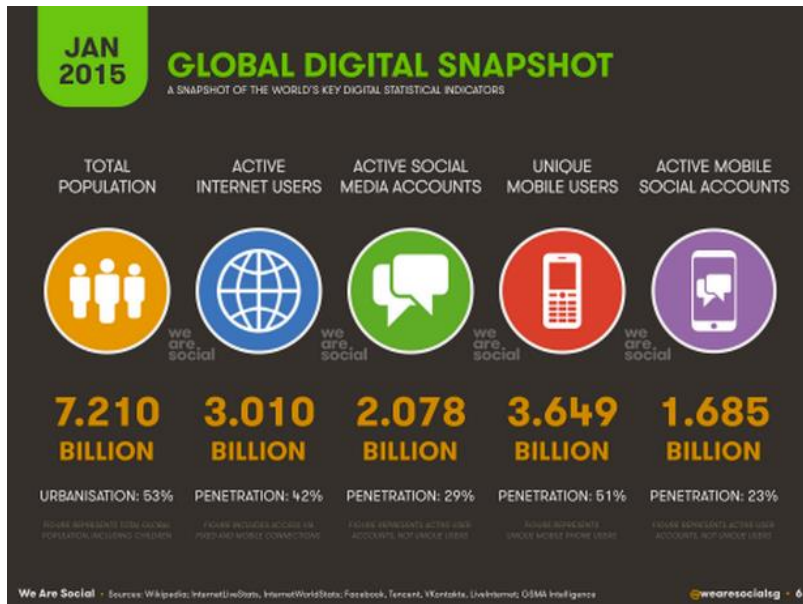
Appendix 3 The consumer usage of devices 2011

Source: <http://thetechjournal.com/electronics/mobile/google-stats-pc-usage-holding-firm-tablet-and-smartphone-use-growing.xhtml>

Appendix 4 The usage of Social media channels worldwide October 2011

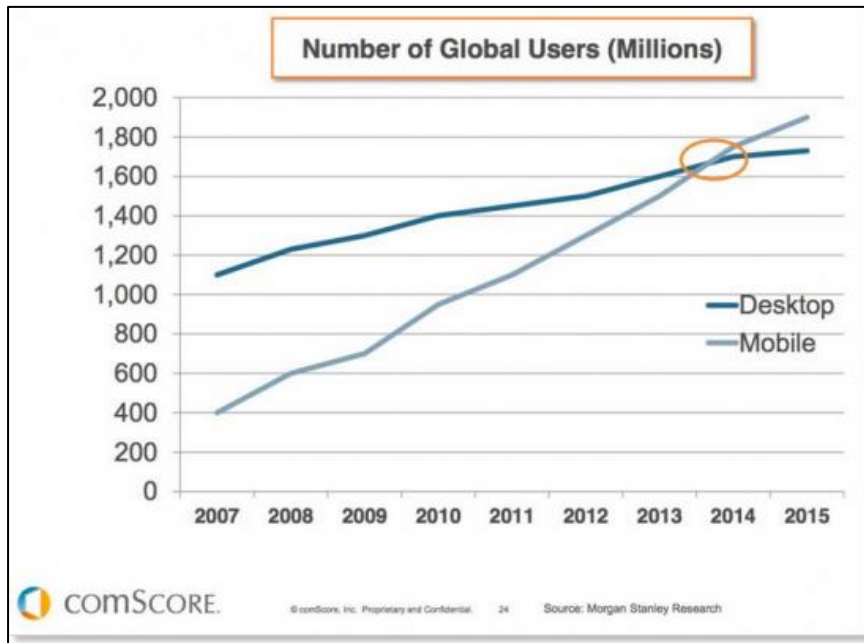
Source: <http://www accuracast.com/news/social-media-7471/social-networking-most-popular-online-activity/>

Appendix 5 Mobile users and active mobile social accounts for 2015



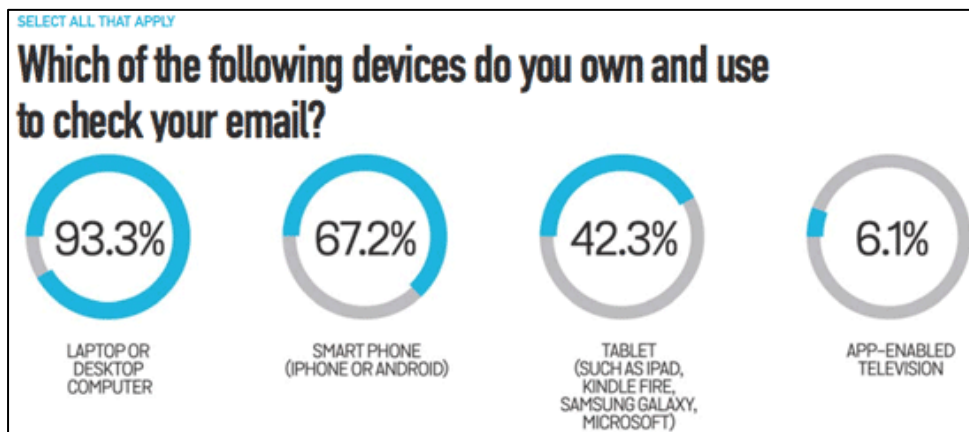
Source: <http://www.jeffbullas.com/2015/04/08/33-social-media-facts-and-statistics-you-should-know-in-2015/>

Appendix 6 The number of Global users from 2007-2015 by Dave Chaffey



Source: <http://www.smartinsights.com/mobile-marketing/mobile-marketing-analytics/mobile-marketing-statistics/>

Appendix 7 The devices for checking emails 2015

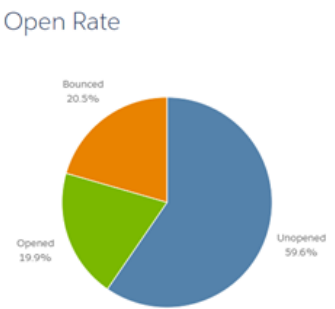


Source: <http://www.emailmonday.com/mobile-email-usage-statistics>

Appendix 8 Cumulative actions of responders

The data based on the Pardot tool report analytics, the period – from the beginning of 2016.

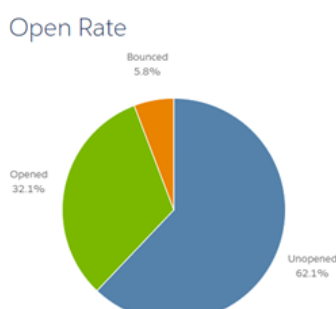
Send to contacts of	Benelux
Period	Feb-16
Campaign name	Email - remarketing
Subject line	Kom langs op onze Sales Dag!
Subject line EN	come to our sales day
Content	Sales offer
Sent on	5/2/2016 17:24
Total sent to	151
Total delivered to	120
HTML open rate	20%
Unique HTML opens	30
Total click throughrate	0%
Opt-out rate	1.50%



Status	Percentage
Unopened	59.6%
Bounced	20.5%
Opened	19.9%

Created by user:	Mariia Svirelina
Pardot reporting	

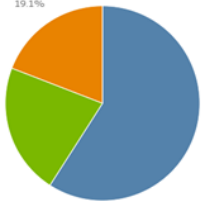
Send to contacts of	France
Period	Feb-16
Campaign name	FR News TIP France
Subject line	TIP NEWS FRANCE - Janvier 2016
Subject line EN	
Content	Informative email/ news about TIP France; special offers; Newsletter for France
Sent on	2/15/2016 19:06
Total sent to	467
Total delivered to	440
HTML open rate	32.10%
Unique HTML opens	150
Total click throughrate	0%
Opt-out rate	0.23%




Status	Percentage
Unopened	62.1%
Bounced	5.8%
Opened	32.1%

Created by user:	Mariia Svirelina
Pardot reporting	

Send to contacts of	Benelux
Period	Mar-16
Campaign name	Email
Subject line	Nieuwe trailers beschikbaar
Subject line EN	New trailers available
Content	New trailers for sales
Sent on	3/9/2016 14:57
Total sent to	401
Total delivered to	373
HTML open rate	15.60%
Total click throughrate	1.70%
Opt-out rate	0.55%

Send to contacts of	Benelux								
Period	Apr-16								
Campaign name	Email - remarketing								
Subject line	Waarom huren of kopen als beide ook kan?								
Subject line EN	Why rent or buy if both can?								
Content	An offer for buying and renting an equipment								
Sent on	4/21/2016 16:03								
Total sent to	1,364								
Total delivered to	1,103								
HTML open rate	21.80%								
Unique HTML opens	297								
Total click throughrate	0								
Opt-out rate	1.09%								
<p>Open Rate</p>  <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Category</th> <th>Percentage</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Unopened</td> <td>59.1%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Opened</td> <td>21.8%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Bounced</td> <td>19.1%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Category	Percentage	Unopened	59.1%	Opened	21.8%	Bounced	19.1%
Category	Percentage								
Unopened	59.1%								
Opened	21.8%								
Bounced	19.1%								
Created by user:	Mariia Svirelina								
Pardot reporting									

Send to contacts of	France and other								
Period	Mar-16								
Campaign name	Email								
Subject line	Semi-remorque à vendre mars 2016								
Subject line EN	Semitrailer for sale in March 2016								
Content	the range of trailers								
Sent on	3/2/2016 15:41								
Total sent to	4615								
Total delivered to	4454								
HTML open rate	35.60%								
Unique HTML opens	1642								
Total click throughrate	6%								
Opt-out rate	0.45								
<p>Open Rate</p>  <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Category</th> <th>Percentage</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Unopened</td> <td>60.9%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Opened</td> <td>35.6%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Bounced</td> <td>3.5%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Category	Percentage	Unopened	60.9%	Opened	35.6%	Bounced	3.5%
Category	Percentage								
Unopened	60.9%								
Opened	35.6%								
Bounced	3.5%								
Created by user:	Mariia Svirelina								
Pardot reporting									

Send to contacts of	UK and Ireland
Period	Feb-16
Campaign name	Email
Subject line	Visit us at the CV Show
Content	An invitation to the CV show
Sent on	2/29/2016 15:13
Total sent to	983
Total delivered to	802
HTML open rate	15.30%
Total opens	150
Total click throughrate	0.62%
Opt-out rate	1.12%
<p>Open Rate</p> <p>A pie chart titled 'Open Rate' showing the distribution of email status: Unopened (66.3%, blue), Bounced (18.4%, orange), and Opened (15.3%, green).</p>	
Created by user:	Mariia Svirelina
Pardot reporting	

Send to contacts of	Germany and Austria
Period	Apr-16
Campaign name	Email
Subject line	WER ZUERST KOMMT, MIETET NEUE SATTELAUFLIEGER UND WECHSELBRÜCKEN BEI TIP
Subject line EN	WHO FIRST COME RENTS NEW TRAILER AND CHANGING BRIDGES AT TIP
Content	Renting of trailers
Sent on	4/6/2016 9:25
Total sent to	2,052
Total delivered to	1,067
open rate	27.60%
opens	566
Total click throughrate	1.88%
Opt-out rate	0.72%
<p>Open Rate</p> <p>A pie chart titled 'Open Rate' showing the distribution of email status: Unopened (65.3%, blue), Bounced (7.2%, orange), and Opened (27.6%, green).</p>	
Created by user:	Mariia Svirelina
Pardot reporting	

Source: made by author

Appendix 9 The answers for an interview with Julia Pilkes

Name	Julia Pilkes
Job position	Senior Marketing Communications Specialist
Number of years working at TIP	Augut 2012 - Present (5 years)
Question	Answer
What is the current goal of email marketing communications for TIP Trailer Services ?	The current goal of email marketing communications is to generate leads and to create brand awareness.
What is the current budget for online marketing communications?	The current budget varies based on the changes in marketing plan activities from 30000-40000 EUR per year.
How much were the costs for implementation of Pardot tool?	The starting costs were 6000 EUR; after the process of implementation TIP Trailer Services pays 24000 EUR every year.
When was Pardot tool implemented?	Pardot tool was implemented in January 2016.
How long does TIP Trailer Services use the email marketing communications?	TIP Trailer Services uses email marketing communications since 2011; on a regional level - from 2014. The previous marketing automation tool for sending out email called "iContact". At the present moment Germany, France, the UK are involved in the process of sending out email to customers.
How the process of internal communications is happening before sending out an email to customers?	The regional managers usually come up with an idea, the discussion is followed to the sales managers. Also the initiative can come from the marketing manger. Before sending an email, it should be approved by the leading marketing managers.
How TIP Trailer Services is currently growing the email addresses of contacts for a distribution list?	There are several options to gather the email addresses. On the website there are four forms over four language domains. The forms are for leasing, rental, maintenance and repair and general form "Contact us". In addition, there TIP Trailer Services participates in the exhibitions. For additional payment the company has an access to the payment details of visitors and their email addresses. Also while contacting the sales team there is a form where costomers fill in the contact details. Moreover, through the social media channels.
What are the results of lead generation after launching a new website?	For the period from 1 January - 15 April 2016, there were 13 leads, from 15 April - 3 May 2016 there were 49 leads.

How often are the email communications sent out to customers at the moment?	There are not enough communications; once per month or once per two months.
What is the current biggest challenge for TIP Trailer Services in terms of email marketing communications?	<p>From my own perspective there are several challenges. Firstly, it needs to be internally organized. For the reason that people are working in the company on average for many years, they are not used to the execution of online marketing activities. The process of getting used to the system is time-consuming and people need clear explanation of how it is working. Now the email marketing communications are planned to be sent out by regional marketing managers. They better understand the market of region and more rapidly responding to the changes within the industry. The second problem is short-term orientation. The emails, which should be sent out are planned in a short period without overall strategy and they are not thought through carefully. Even when the content of email has been approved, small change within financial statements can lead to the change of the whole email. The last challenge is legal aspect. There are inactive customers within Salesforce, which TIP Trailer Services is unable to contact if they are not doing the business with company anymore. The request for opt0in can be sent only once. The active customers are the ones with whom TIP Trailer Services has been doing business for the last 12 months.</p>
Which messages does TIP Trailer Services want to deliver via email communication channel?	It is a combination of informative and persuasive messages. Informative ones are to increase brand awareness (it can include the branch locations, acquisitions). Persuasive ones are to increase lead generation (for example, promotional offers, quality maintenance, 45 years of experience on the market).

Source: made by author

Appendix 10 An average contract value in 2015 within Sales form platform

1	Solution Type	Number of Units	Asset Type	Calc Deal Term in Months	Unit Rate Currency	Unit Rate	Calc Revenue (converted) Currency	Calc Revenue (converted)	Expected Close Date	Solution Country
4839	Capex	4	Tanker Trailer	24	GBP	251	EUR	34422.86	1/29/2015	United Kingdom
4840	Capex	3	Tanker Trailer	24	GBP	266	EUR	27360	1/29/2015	United Kingdom
4841	Capex	1	Tanker Trailer	36	GBP	240	EUR	12342.86	1/29/2015	United Kingdom
4842	Capex	1	Tanker Trailer	24	GBP	363	EUR	12445.71	1/29/2015	United Kingdom
4843	Capex	1	Tanker Trailer	24	GBP	318	EUR	10902.86	1/29/2015	United Kingdom
4844	Capex	2	Tanker Trailer	12	GBP	313	EUR	10731.43	1/29/2015	United Kingdom
4845	Capex	1	Tanker Trailer	36	GBP	228	EUR	11725.71	1/29/2015	United Kingdom
4846	LTL Infleet	1	Tanker Trailer	36	GBP	1216.66	EUR	62571.43	2/11/2015	United Kingdom
4847	LTL Infleet	1	Trailer Chassis	16	GBP	116.95	EUR	2672.86	8/24/2015	United Kingdom
4848	Capex	150	Trailer Curtainsider	84	GBP	345	EUR	6210000	5/29/2015	United Kingdom
4849	Contract Maintenance	26	Tanker Trailer	84	GBP	592.73	EUR	1849317.14	9/30/2015	United Kingdom
4850	Infleet Spec Capex	10	Trailer Van	84	GBP	475	EUR	570000	5/27/2015	United Kingdom
4851	LTL Infleet	1	Tanker Rigid	12	GBP	4345.24	EUR	74490	3/26/2015	United Kingdom
4852	Infleet Spec Capex	1	Tanker Rigid	24	GBP	7604.17	EUR	260714.29	3/26/2015	United Kingdom
4853	LTL Infleet	2	Tanker Rigid	12	GBP	4345.24	EUR	148980	2/23/2015	United Kingdom
4854	LTL Infleet	1	Tanker Rigid	24	GBP	2585.42	EUR	88642.86	10/21/2015	United Kingdom
4855	Infleet Spec Capex	5	Tanker Trailer	60	GBP	1019.91	EUR	437104.29	3/24/2015	United Kingdom
4856	LTL Infleet	1	Tanker Rigid	12	GBP	3302.38	EUR	56612.86	2/23/2015	United Kingdom
4857	Infleet Spec Capex	5	Trailer Reefer	36	GBP	1148.33	EUR	295284.29	9/10/2015	United Kingdom
4858	LTL Infleet	3	Tanker Trailer	24	GBP	1412.2	EUR	145254.29	8/10/2015	United Kingdom
4859	LTL Infleet	1	Tanker Rigid	12	GBP	2715.77	EUR	46555.71	9/22/2015	United Kingdom
4860	TEF	50	Trailer Curtainsider	60	GBP	500	EUR	0	9/16/2015	United Kingdom
4861	Infleet Spec Capex	100	Trailer Curtainsider	12	GBP	390	EUR	668571.43	3/24/2015	United Kingdom
4862								53203.69536		

Source: made by author

Appendix 11 The internal survey regarding the email marketing communications

The goals of below survey are to gather information for providing the further recommendations regarding:

- The frequency of emails to be sent out
- The content of the emails to be sent out
- The extent of personalization in email communications

According to your personal work experience in terms of online marketing activities, please answer the following questions. Please feel free to make any comments or additional recommendations.

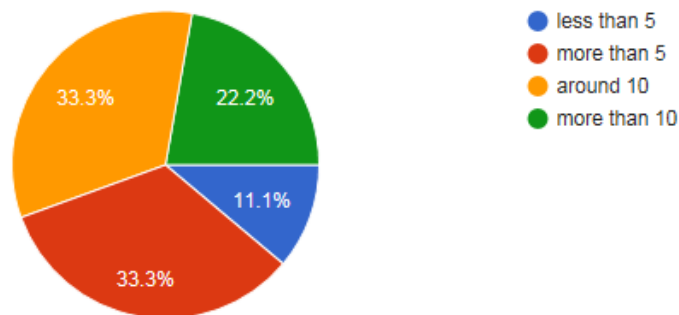
- 1) Name
- 2) Number of years working for TIP Trailer Services
- 3) Which countries should be target firstly for the implementation of email marketing strategy? (You can choose several answers)
 - Sweden
 - Finland
 - Belgium
 - UK
 - Ireland
 - Spain
 - Italy
 - Romania
 - Poland
 - Czech Republic
 - Austria
 - Denmark
 - France
 - Germany
 - Netherlands
- 4) What are the introductory words, which you use while sending out email communications to customers?
 - Dear customer
 - Dear “your first name”
 - Dear “your first name” and “last name”
 - No introductory words
- 5) Which types of content in your opinion would be relevant for customers while sending out emails? (You can choose several answers)
 - Text
 - Videos
 - Images
 - Presentations
 - Animations

- All of the above
 - Other:_____
- 6) If TIP Trailer Services would have a specific strategy for the email marketing communications, how often do you think they should be sent out?
 - On a daily basis
 - On a weekly basis
 - On a biweekly basis
 - On a monthly basis
 - Once per two months
 - On a quarterly basis
 - Other:_____
- 7) In your opinion, which topics can be covered within email marketing communications and might increase engagement with customers?
 - Logistics industry news
 - The ways to make an industry environmentally friendly
 - Technological innovations
 - Special offers and discounts
 - Advice regarding the logistics industry
 - Amusement material
 - Company news updates
 - Other:_____
- 8) What do you think is the biggest challenge for TIP Trailer Services in email communications?

Source: made by author

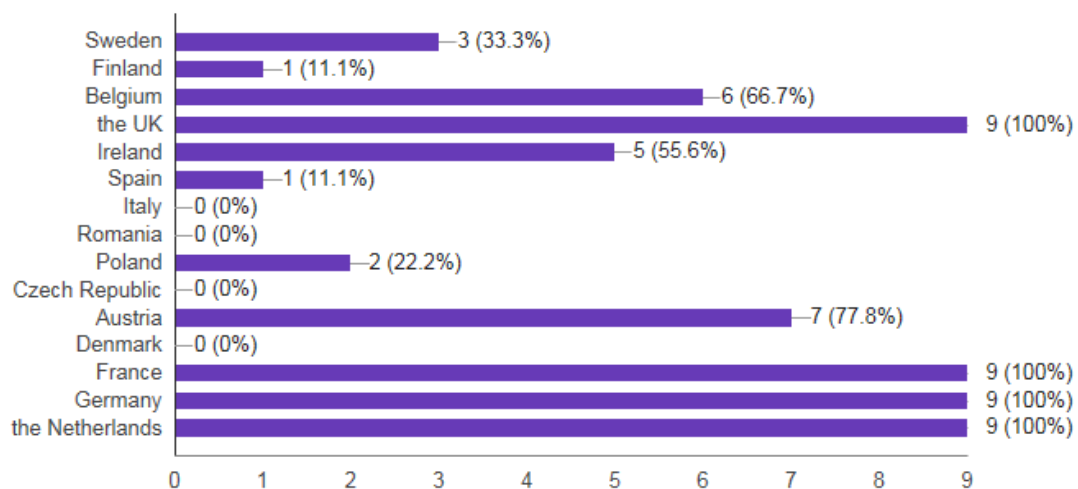
Appendix 12 The results from the internal survey

Number of years working in the company (9 responses)



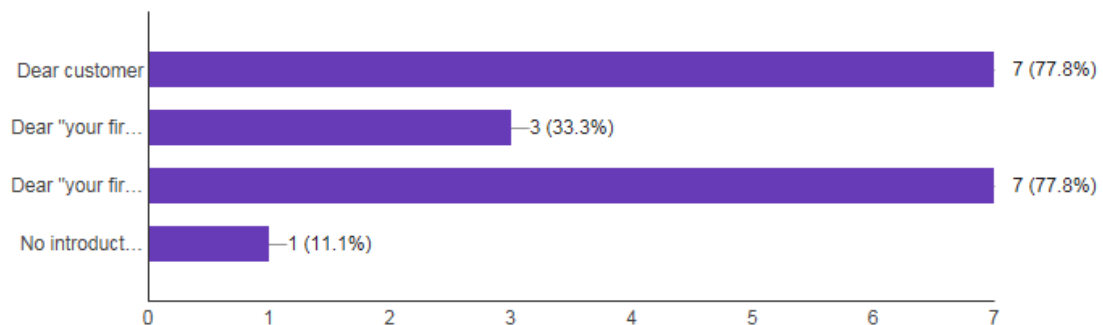
1) Which countries should be target firstly for the implementation of email marketing strategy? (You can choose several answers)

(9 responses)



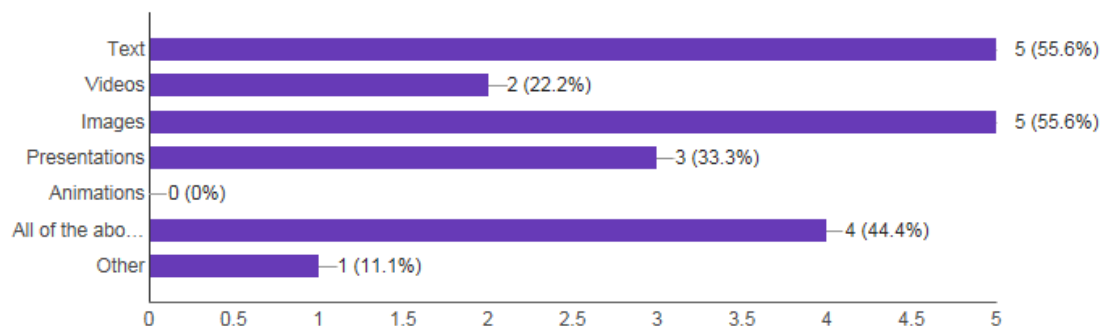
2) What are the introductory words, which you use while sending out email communications to customers?

(9 responses)



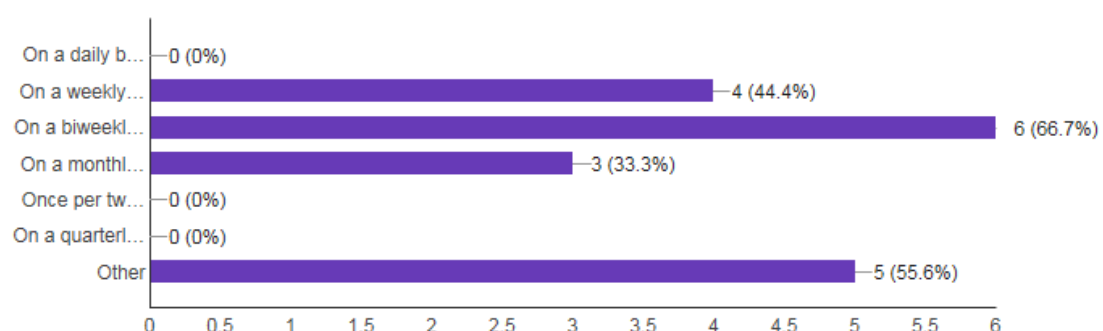
3) Which types of content in your opinion would be relevant for customers while sending out emails? (You can choose several answers)

(9 responses)



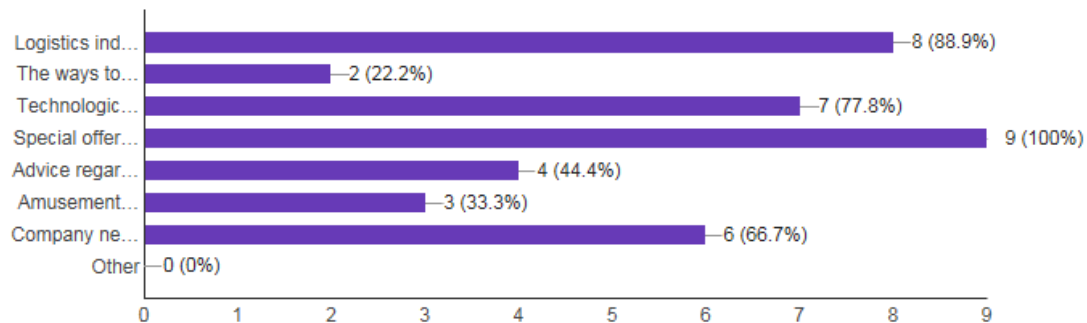
4) If TIP Trailer Services would have a specific strategy for the email marketing communications, how often do you think they should be sent out?

(9 responses)



5) In your opinion, which topics can be covered within email marketing communications and might increase engagement with customers?

(9 responses)



6) What do you think is the biggest challenge for TIP Trailer Services in email communications?

(9 responses)

To create relevant information, the recipients are interested in, so they look forward to our newsletter and don't opt-out

Internal process of planning email campaign; low amount of emails

reactivate inactive customers

The regional involvement and cooperation with managers at ASC

To measure the results and cooperate with sales team

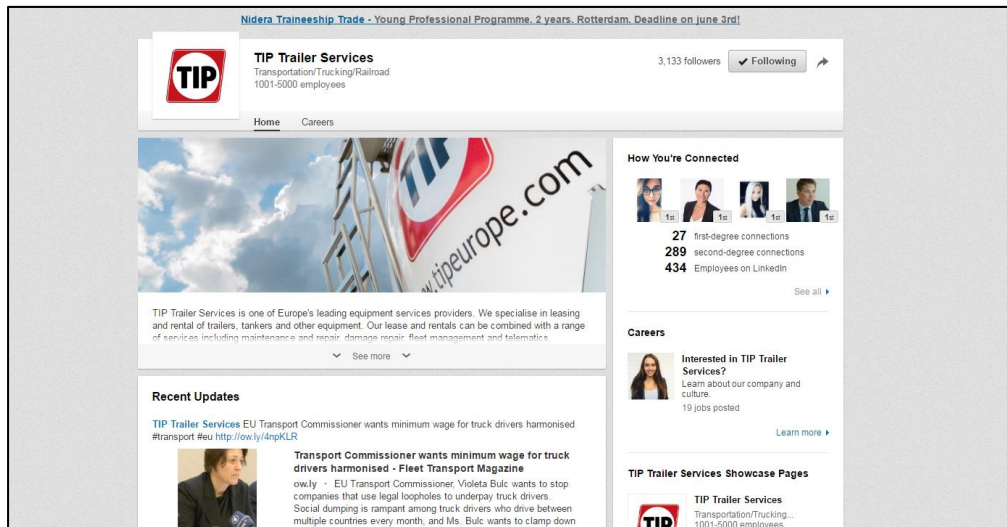
The process of keeping interested the current recipients

To communicate the leads to the sales team

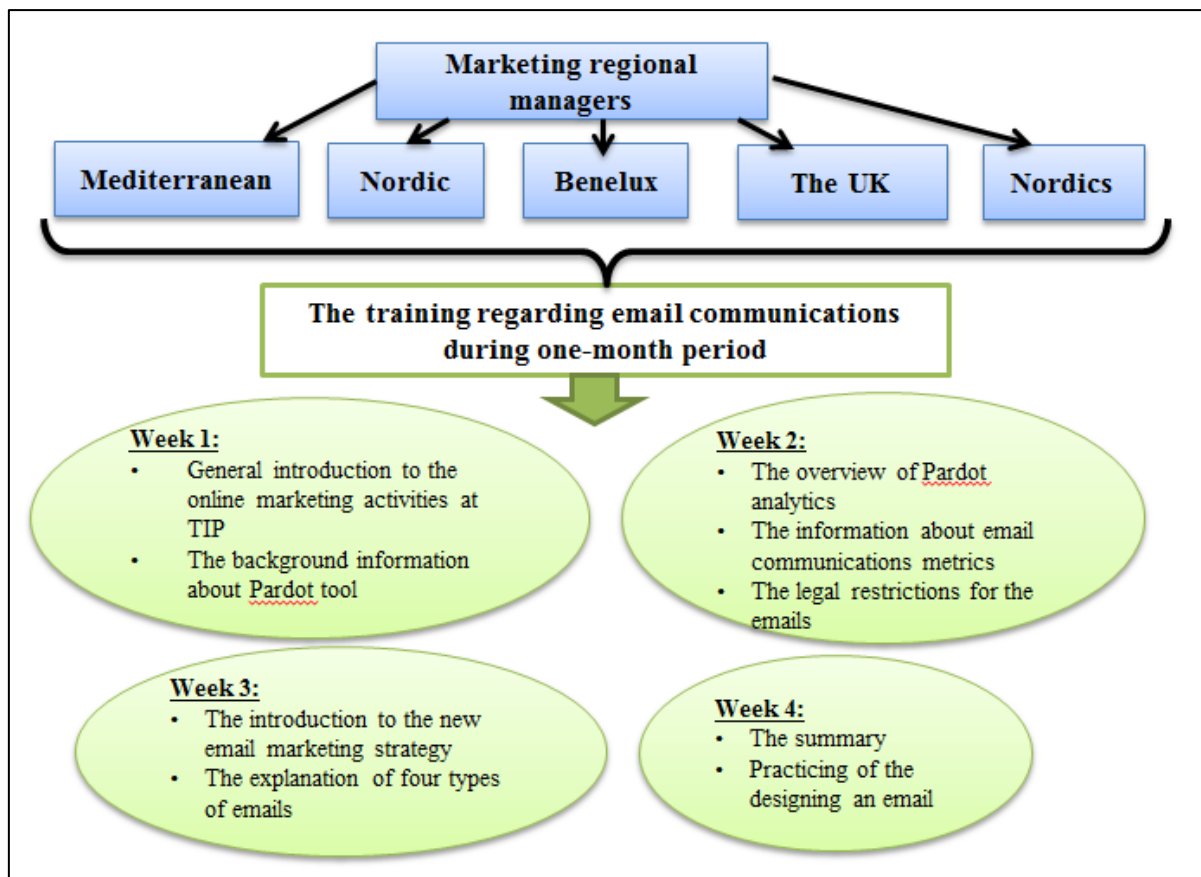
No structure of the process

The difference in structure of communication for every country, legal restrictions

Source: made by author

Appendix 13 The screenshot of LinkedIn profile of TIP Trailer Services

Source:<https://www.linkedin.com/company/8540172?trk=tyah&trkInfo=clickedVertical%3Acompany%2CclickedEntityId%3A8540172%2Cidx%3A2-2-3%2CtarId%3A1464015533367%2Ctas%3Atip>

Appendix 14 The process map of internal training for TIP Trailer Services

Source: made by author

Appendix 15 Company supervisor feedback

APPENDIX 7C: IBMS-STUDENT FEEDBACK BY COMPANY SUPERVISOR

In order to achieve a reliable evaluation of the graduation project, Fontys International Business School asks you to give a comprehensive feedback on the performance of the student. We will use your evaluation in determining the final grade. Naturally, responsibility for the final grade lies with the university supervisor. The grade for "Performance at the required level within the organisation", is influenced directly by you. The student himself writes a reflective report on his competences, performed in the company. The university supervisor will match your feedback with the competence-report, and decide the final grade, which will be pass or fail. If some items in the formular are not clear, you can contact the university supervisor.

Thank you in advance for your assistance!

A. If there was a vacancy within your organisation, in the specialist field of the graduate student, would you offer this position to him/her?

☐ Yes, because... ☐ No, because...

I am not in a position to answer this question as this does not apply to an internship. Mariia is doing her internship and has learned a lot of new things throughout these months, she is making great progress and I am sure this will help her in her future job.

B. In addition to the actual graduation assignment, did the Student carry out further activities?

Yes, an internship

C. Your opinion on the behaviour, the skills and the attitude of the student in respect of the criteria referred to below

Criteria	excellent	good	sufficient	poor	No opinion
Team working capability	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Goal orientation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Commitment/effort	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Autonomy / initiative	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reliability / punctuality	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Research skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Communicational behaviour	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Organisational capacity / Planning and organizing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Self reflection / learning and self development	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ethical responsibility	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Leadership skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Openness to other opinions	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

D. Your opinion on the professional competences of the Student in respect of the activities employed in the project and in the daily work in the company. At least the 3 chosen competences mentioned in Appendix 5 should have feedback. Nevertheless feedback on other shown competences is also welcome.

Competences	chosen competences	excellent	good	sufficient	poor	Not applicable
1 International Business Awareness The student is able to do an extensive research and make a transparent synopsis of an international study. On this basis he can advise management on the opportunities and threats in the international legal and business environment and attune himself and the company to international trends. The student shows a clear interest in international developments and reads specialist literature on this topic. He is able to attune his own activities and those of the company to international trends.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2 Intercultural Adaptability The student can recognise and appreciate cultural differences in behaviour and values. He has developed an open attitude and is motivated to work abroad. He can make effective use of empathy, or 'frame of reference shifting', to understand and be understood across cultural boundaries. He can maintain an international network essential to his tasks and to the company.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3 International Strategic Vision development The student is able to translate trends in the environment to opportunities and threats for the organisation. He can assess an international strategic policy for a company, clearly defining the strategic limits. He can contribute to the adjustment of a vision and strategy. He can assess the consequences of a vision and strategy for business policies and processes.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
4 Organisational Policy Development The student is able to create an organisational policy while respecting the interdependence between company strategy, business structure and human resources processes.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5 Entrepreneurial Management The student is able to contribute, in cooperation with others, to an optimal exploration by the company of the opportunities for both new and existing products/services in the market and the necessary risks involved. The student contributes to a proactive opportunity-seeking attitude in the company and encourages the company to make effective use of these opportunities.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6 International Marketing Management The student is able to create, change and implement a strategic	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

international marketing plan which includes an analysis of the international environment of the company's position. The plan contains strategies in product development, pricing, distribution and international advertising and promotion.						
7 International Operations Management The student is able to assess international business operations and to advise management on the key issues of supply chain management.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
8 International Business and Management Accounting and Financial Management The student is able to describe and understand the consequences of the various risks inherent to international business. He contributes to management control of a multinational organisation by means of an integrated application of his knowledge of business accounting, management accounting, financial management, and other relevant aspects.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
9 International Human Resource Management (HRM) The student is able to assume the responsibility for the development and integration of HR functions in organisational or corporate strategic context and to assume strategic responsibility in formulating relevant HR policies & practices for the further development of the organisation or corporation in international and intercultural context.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Any comments related to the evaluated general qualifications and professional competences, and points for improvement and/or future employment. Please refer in comments to the qualification (C) or competence-number (D)

As of the first day of her internship, Mariia has been very serious with her internship and her graduation assignment. Throughout the months she has proven to be perfectly capable of working in a team as well as individually.

Mariia is not afraid to work hard and has proven so by combining both her internship and her graduation assignment. Although this has been very difficult at times, she managed to find her way through this.

For a following internship or career opportunity, I think Mariia needs to find something that motivates her into becoming eager to learn more. As mentioned, a problem she is facing during this internship is the fact that she is combining it with a graduation assignment which puts a lot of pressure on individuals already. This leaves out the opportunity to learn as much as possible during the time of the internship.

Furthermore, if Mariia would decide to work within an organisation's marketing and communications department in the future, it would be nice but also important for her to enhance project planning skills.

Overall, I think this internship has provided her with real insight on how things work within an international organisation. Although she had to combine this with her graduation assignment, she has proven to be eager to learn and has been able to put her learnings into practice during this internship.

This formular should be printed out and with signature be given to the student. He will address it to the university supervisor.

Stamp / Date: 4th May 2016

Signature of company supervisor:



Appendix 16 Competence report

Mariia Svirelina

The competences, which the report is based on are as following: I.2.Intercultural competence; IV.3.Business communication; VI.6.Learning and self-development. They have been chosen according to the responsibilities of internship, the topic for the Graduation assignment and personal goals. During the graduation project, a considerable amount of time was spent on the performing professional tasks in the case company. I have been working at TIP Trailer Services as a Marketing and Communications intern in the Commercial department. My manager in the company and supervisor for the Graduation assignment was Julia Pilkes. The period of internship is from January 2016 - present. The Graduation assignment has been done in accordance with the company's business problem in the field of email marketing. After finishing the part of my internship the company supervisor gave me a feedback in accordance with Appendix 7C of "Graduation Project regulations" and can be found as an attachment in **Appendix 16** of this report.

Reflection on the evaluation of Company supervisor

As it was mentioned in the beginning the company supervisor has given a feedback according to the chosen competences and overall performance during the internship. The behavior, skills and the attitude were evaluated reasonable. The feedback was discussed and there were important guidelines given regarding the future professional development. My performance as a member of marketing team, planning and organizing, self-development were evaluated as "good" and highlighted as strong skills by the supervisor while giving a feedback. I have put a lot of effort to understand the culture of the company, to integrate to the team and catch all the main details of given tasks to execute my responsibilities immediately. However, in the same time the punctuality was evaluated as "sufficient". Sometimes I planned the meetings and did not place them straight away to my working calendar, as a result - I forgot about them. This happened only in the beginning. During the time, I did my best and improved some aspects of professional behavior.

During the meeting Julia mentioned that the sufficient knowledge for Intercultural competence, business communication, learning and self-development was gained successfully. The multicultural environment of the company, its experience on the market for 45 years and special team for interns "Van Dijk team" helped with getting a valuable experience. The overall work in the company was very pleasant and all the colleagues were great to work with. There was always a support from different departments if any questions were raised. The meetings with my company supervisor regarding the process of thesis and general projects at TIP Trailer Services were carried out on a weekly basis. The tasks given were challenging and interesting to work with.

Reflections on the activities performed in the company

All the activities, which were performed in the company were business-relevant and contributed to my professional growth. The main activities were related to the internal Newsletter translated to five languages and all communications during the process of its execution through email marketing channel. It helped me in identifying relevant dimensions of culture and to develop self-awareness. Moreover, as it was mentioned previously the working atmosphere was very international and it aimed to find an individual approach for

every person as they had different cultural and professional backgrounds. It is an essential for working as a team.

The daily communication with the managers and suppliers improved the ability to express myself fluently in English while writing as well as speaking - the business communication process. The suppliers were translating agencies, design agencies and IT support agency. With each organization the full awareness of ongoing projects and the alignment with corporate culture were needed. The email communications, which were send out daily firstly were proofread by Julia. Afterwards, the mistakes made during the process of proofreading were discussed and improved for the next time. For my graduation assignment all the projects during my internship were relevant. For instance, the project of re-launching a website for TIP Trailer Services, establishing email campaigns for external and internal communications; Google analytics, email analytics, implementation of Pardot automation tool. Therefore, while writing thesis about email marketing communications within the company, I felt comfortable and all the questions were discussed with experts. The activities, which were executed in the online marketing channels were related to the general strategy of TIP Trailer Services. IT aimed to look from the bigger perspective on the company, not just from the point of Marketing department, where I was mainly involved.

During the period of doing my internship, I also have figured out my strengths and weaknesses in regards to the professional environment. I was writing a list, where my mistakes or improvements were mentioned, so that further I was able to compare, what changed and what still needs to be changed. This helped to keep my learning and self-development process updated.

Critical self-reflection on the strengths and weaknesses

After completing my internship at TIP Trailer Services, I can point out my weaknesses and strengths. In the beginning of doing my internship I was quite disorganized. My goal orientation was not clear, therefore I tried to work on it. With a help of my supervisor I managed to organize and plan my working schedule beforehand and be responsible to check it constantly. I have set up the goals for myself in the working field and it became easier to be focused on some ongoing project and take the additional ones. My strong skills were being hard-working, open to learn and to listen the colleagues. This helped me to integrate into the social culture of TIP Trailer Services. I have communicated with employees from different departments and always was ready to accept their point of view and reconsider mine to reach the best outcome for the project.

To sum up, I would like to say that my engagement with the marketing activities was a great base for writing my graduation project about email marketing communications. The general process of searching for the information and consulting with personnel at TIP Trailer Services helped me to improve my international background, professional communication within the business and own learning and self-development. This experience confirmed in my mind an importance of ability to integrate into a business system by applying my best practices and as a result, gathering and improving skills.

Appendix 17 Statement of authenticity

I hereby solemnly declare,

1. that I myself wrote my graduation report, without the assistance of any third party;
2. that in my report, I identified and specified all direct literal quotes from literature and indirect quotes (ideas/indirect quotations) from other authors.

I am fully aware that any violation of this code may result in disadvantageous consequences for me (for example withdrawal of study credits and, in the case of a repeated violation, withdrawal of complete study units). If fraud can be proved, I will be required to bear the costs of investigation into and sourcing of the original document.

Place, date

The Netherlands, Venlo

24 May 2016

Signature